

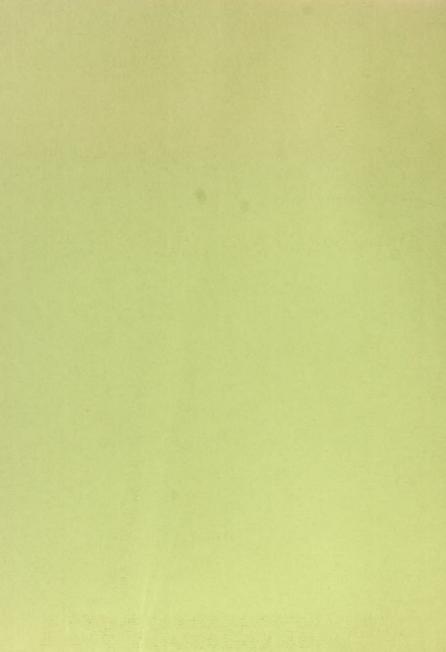
N. C.

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

A LONG RANGE PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR

DOWNTOWN SMITTHELD

SMITHFIELD, N.C. 임 🗅 ၉၅



# CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT A LONG RANGE PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN SMITTIFIELD

SMITHFIELD, N.C.

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THIS REPORT IS PREPARED FOR
THE TOWN OF SMITHFIELD, NORTH CAROLINA

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# CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

The City of Smithfield is engaged in a serious effort to improve itself, to provide a better environment and a better way of life for all who live in or visit Smithfield. This effort involves many different activities and requires that all of the citizens work through their government and their various business and civic associations in a true partnership of public and private enterprise. If it is to have any lasting success, this partnership must continue, since no one group can achieve much without complementary actions by others.

One of the roles played by the City government is the development of a long-range plan for the physical development of the town, employing studies and recommendations by professional planners. This is itself an example of the partnership idea, involving the City Council, the Planning Board, the Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency, the North Carolina Department of Conservation and Development, and the many businessmen and other citizens who have given generously of their time and knowledge. The plan is worth nothing unless it is carried out; the professional consultants can only make suggestions, the responsibility for making improvements rests with the citizens and businessmen of the community.

This is a report on one of the constituent elements of the long-range community-wide development plan, a plan for the downtown area. The downtown is only a very small fraction of the land area of the City, and very few of the City's residents live in it. The importance of downtown is that it is the one location which serves and is used by all members of the community and, in fact, symbolizes the community.

The mental image evoked by the name of a city is a picture of its downtown, its main street. The quality of this symbol, whether it is good or bad, pleasant; inviting or ugly and repelling, is itself important. And the quality of this symbol is in many respects a direct reflection of the effectiveness with which the downtown serves its basic function. The people of Smithfield are not satisfied with the efficiency and appearance with which their downtown serves them. It is probably no worse in this respect than the downtown of most other cities, but there is certainly room for improvement. A sound long-range plan, intelligently and insistently carried out, is essential if there is to be a lasting improvement. Most of the physical deficiencies of downtown can be traced to facilities which were designed for the needs and circumstances of yesterday, rather than those of today and tomorrow. Buildings and other facilities last for a long time, and thus it is essential that they be planned with as much thought to the future as to the present. This plan is an over-all guide for thought about the future of downtown Smithfield. If conscientiously followed it will serve to rationalize and coordinate future development which is clearly in the interests of all concerned-

The planning consultants who have prepared this report for the Planning Board and the Smithfield community do not expect, and do not want their recommendations to be followed blindly, detail by detail. If for ro other reason, this would be undesirable because opportunities and limitations change in unforeseeable ways. And, as a practical matter, recommendations which are not understood are seldom carried out, and if they are carried out, the details are occuly planned and tend to defeat the intended purpose. This is a plea for constructive criticism of the recommendations presented here, criticism based on study and understanding of the principles

and reasoning underlying the recommendations. If those directly responsible for the development of the downtown area will base their deliberations and decisions on a thorough understanding of this report as well as their more detailed and up-to-date knowledge of specific factors involved, and will call on appropriate expert consultants when necessary, what they do will indeed be of great benefit to the community and a lasting tribute to their efforts.

The chapter which follows is an over-all summary of the findings and recommendations of this study. It provides a guide to the necessarily detailed and technical body of the report. The next few chapters are each devoted to one of the significant problems to be solved by the plan. The plan itself is the physical design solution which synthesizes the various considerations relevant to development of an attractive, efficient, and meaningful downtown area in Smithfield. This is recommended as a goal for the community to achieve by 1980. The final chapter is a general discussion of the steps which must be taken by the various public and private groups involved to make the plan a reality.



# CHAPTER II SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Downtown is the ideal place for activities which must be easy to reach from all parts of the area which Smithfield serves, and which must be in constant interaction with one another. These are the activities which give downtown its distinctive character and importance. In Chapter III we will discuss the nature of these various activities and describe the essential function of a downtown. Downtown Smithfield has the basic requirements for serving this function well, but it also has problems which can cause it to decline instead of developing to its full potential.

What is the full potential of downtown Smithfield? In Chapters IV and V we will deal with this question with respect to retailing, which is and should be the largest category of downtown activities, and which is particularly vulnerable to pressures outside of downtown and to deficiencies within it. In Chapter IV the present position of downtown Smithfield retailing is placed in the perspectives of recent history and of trends in Johnston County. Smithfield has maintained its traditional large share of the growing retail trade in the County. In order to retain this share, Smithfield retailers have become more efficient and effective, but their competition in the County and beyond has become stronger.

The trade area of downtown Smithfield is virtually all of Johnston County, which is unusually large for a City of its size in such close proximity to several much larger cities. In Chapter V the trends observed in downtown Smithfield and in its trade area are used in a mathmatical model to estimate the growth of downtown retailing from now to 1980. By that

time retail sales volumes should be about twice what they are now, despite some decrease in the population of the trade area, if personal incomes continue to rise as they have over the past 15 years. In spite of these projected retail sales increases there is, in downtown Smithfield, potential for greatly increased efficiency in the use of the store buildings, which means that there will be little net change in the total amount of space used for retailing. There will, however, be some substantial new stores built during this period, and the location of these is critical to the future of the downtown core area.

Chapter VI deals with the most pressing need in the downtown area today, adequate parking for customers and visitors. This is deficient both in quality and in quantity. There is need now for some 350 additional spaces, which is more than are presently serving the core area. By 1980 the supply should be more than doubled again, to a total of at least 1,300 spaces. It is as important to have parking lots which are well located, paved, and attractive as it is to have enough parking spaces.

The future of downtown depends as much on some other activities as it does on retailing. To be effective, downtown must have the proper mixture of activities, each located in the proper relationship to the others. Chaper VII is concerned with the other major land uses which belong in the core area, offices, governmental and other institutions, parks, and parking, and the requirements for each in terms of floor space and arrangement.

Any part of a city should be visually attractive as well as functionally efficient. This is particularly true for the downtown area since it is the symbol and focal point of a community. In Chapter VIII, the visual and spacial aspects

of downtown Smithfield are given focus. How to profitably exploit the existing potentials, to create new nodes of amenities, to eliminate some of the eyesores in extant, etc., are some of the major considerations which are duly brought up, analyzed and proposals offered.

These analyses are made for one purpose -- to find the strength, weakness and opportunities which are related to the physical development of downtown. The resulting proposals are integrated and culminated in the <u>Long Range Physical Improvement Plan for Downtown Smithfield</u>, the ninth chapter of this study. Some of the highlights of the plan are listed as follows.

- A more rational physical arrangement of downtown activities derived according to the amount of interaction among them.
- An improved circulation scheme that is designed to make downtown Smithfield an easily accessible destination for motorists and pedestrians alike.
- The development of a comprehensive parking scheme which concentrates the majority of parking spaces around the perimeter of the downtown area, thereby,
- Preventing further traffic congestion within the downtown, as well as,
- Effectively separating vehicular traffic from pedestrian traffic.
- The compaction of the downtown retail core for the benefit of pedestrian shoppers.
- The erection of a weatherproof, low-rise arcade to accommodate the future expansion of <u>small</u> retail and personal and business service type establishments.
- The creation of sheltered pedestrian walks linking activity nodes and parking areas.

- The creation of pleasant outdoor or sheltered areas of rest and recreation within the downtown area.
- Landscaping the physical approaches to downtown Smithfield.

Ways and means to carry out various portions of the Plan are essential if the above stated goals and objectives are to be converted into reality. Prompt actions such as those listed below should be soon taken as hesitation and postponement invariably incur added cost at a later date. Opportunities, once lost, often cannot be regained in the future. The "Smithfield Plan" currently in progress, serves as a most opportune front runner for the more basic, long-range improvements to come; and for enlivening and sustaining public enthusiasm in community planning projects. It is urgent that:

- The tobacco warehouses located in the heart of the town be torn down and relocated.
- Some form of public or quasi-public body be established to handle such downtown revitalization problems as off-street parking, land assemblage, promotional projects of various types, etc.
- A bypass for U. S. Highway 70 around Smithfield be given serious consideration, in order to forestall future traffic congestion in downtown and ensure safety of the downtown pedestrain population.
- The "Smithfield Plan", as a framework for community-wide improvement projects, be institutionalized and elements of the proposals contained herein be added to the "Plan" from time to time so that they may be duly implemented with wider citizen participation.

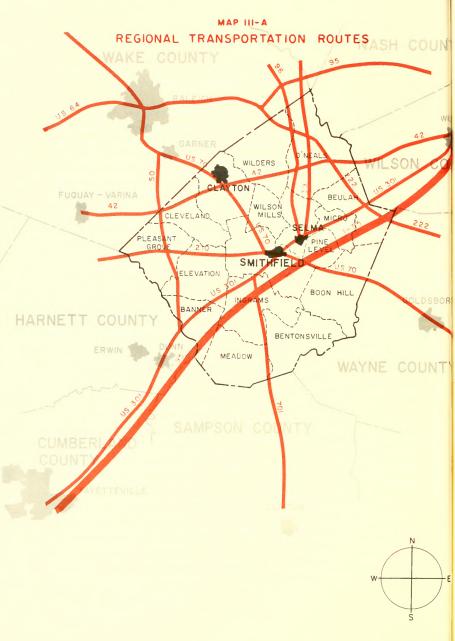
It is evident from the foregoing paragraphs that to attain the goals we have specified will not be a simple task to perform, nor will their attainment be instantaneous. No worthwhile goal is easy and there are no "instant plans" for any downtown. It takes determination and common sense on the part of many unselfish citizens over a long period of years merely to approximate the likeness of a collective urban image. Here, in this study, we can make only a few helpful suggestions to a number of outstanding problems relating to downtown Smithfield. Hopefully, these suggestions may guide constructive actions toward the general direction of the goals prescribed.



# CHAPTER III THE FUNCTIONS OF DOWNTOWN SMITHFIELD

Business is the dominant element in downtown Smithfield, as it is in every downtown area. This dominance must continue. This is not to assert that business is in any sense more important to the community than the cultural, institutional, and governmental activities which serve the residents from locations downtown or elsewhere, or more important than the farms and factories which export goods from the area thus forming its economic base. It is not meaningful to ask whether one kind of activity is more important than another; the ideal community has a proper place for every activity. Downtown is the proper place for some activities, and not for others.

The basic function of downtown is to assemble people from all parts of the community and beyond, and provide them with services which are necessarily or best provided at one central location. It is the proper location of activities which must maintain close relationships with one another, such as lawyers who have functional linkages to one another and to the courts and public records. It is the proper location of the City and County governments which represent and act on behalf of all the members of the community. It is the proper location for retailers who, in combination with complementary and competitive businesses, can serve a wider market than they could in isolation from others. It is the proper location for those who must keep in touch with all sections and elements of the community, such as politicians, newspapermen, and bankers. In various communities all of these typical and natural downtown functions have virtually disappeared from downtown and moved to suburban locations. But in every case this has happened because some combination of specific



defects in downtown has outweighed the natural functional advantages of downtown, and in every case the community has suffered because of these changed of location. One of these specific defects is the location in downtown in inappropriate activities, activities which do not contribute to the network of interactions but rather tend to destroy it by separating activities which would generate such interaction if they were in close proximity. In the jargon of retailers these are "dead spots" and there are few buildings which are more of a dead spot than a tobacco warehouse.

A downtown must be accessible from every part of the area it serves, and this means that it must have good roads. Downtown Smithfield is well served in this respect, because it was the center for Johnston County long before the advent of the automobile and hence served by the best roads then, and these roads have been improved and replaced as traffic on them has increased. Construction of Interstate 95 is a logical development in this sequence, which serves downtown Smithfield largely by taking through traffic off of U.S. 301 and out of downtown, which makes U.S. 301 and the downtown streets more convenient for drivers going to Smithfield.

Unlike Rome, all roads do not lead to Smithfield; as the map shows most of those in Johnston County do lead there, and they are and will likely continue to be adequate. The proposed U.S. 70 bypass north of Smithfield will benefit the downtown as did construction of the Interstate, and the proposed improvements to U.S. 70 from the bypass to Garner and of N.C. 210 west to Coats Cross Roads will also improve the assessibility of downtown Smithfield.

The access function is incomplete unless there is good, convenient circulation within the downtown area. Smithfield is fortunate in that respect, too, because the internal

circulation pattern is simple and effective, and curb-tocurb widths appear to be adequate for foreseeable needs. However, increasing traffic volumes may make it necessary to eliminate parking on Second, Third, and Fourth Streets between Johnston and Bridge Streets and to make other minor modifications of a traffic engineering nature.

History has endowed downtown Smithfield with the basic functional prerequisites of an effective downtown area, good access to the region it serves and a sound range of land uses to attract people to downtown. Major access problems which might develop will presumably be dealt with by the State Highway Commission, as has been done in the past. The future development of land uses in downtown presents a more difficult problem for the City and its downtown merchants.

### CHAPTER IV

# RETAILING IN DOWNTOWN SMITHFIELD

In the last chapter we explained why particular kinds of activities are appropriate for downtown locations. Activities which are appropriate include those which serve a wide area and which generate interaction with other downtown activities. Retailing\* is a typical downtown function; most kinds of retailing are appropriate downtown functions, and these kinds of retailing generate much of the network of interaction. Retailing is the largest single category in terms of floor space occupied, both in downtown Smithfield and in most other small and medium size cities' downtown areas. Retailing is also the major activity category whose prospects for growth or continued prosperity in a downtown location are questionable. For these reasons we will concentrate particular attention on this sector of the downtown economy, first tracing the recent history of retailing in Smithfield and Johnston County, and then quantitatively projecting the observed trends to 1980.

The Census of Business data in the table opposite provides an over-all impression of changes in Smithfield's retail trade. It should be noted that these data apply to the City of Smithfield, including but not limited to the downtown, and that they do not include Business and Consumer Services, for which the data are less satisfactory. Since most of Smithfield's retail trade is downtown, and since trends in service

<sup>\*</sup> We will use the terms "retailing" and "retailing and commercial services" interchangeably, to denote not only the sale of goods at retail but also similar personal service and business service activities, such as beauty shops and credit bureaus, except when used in connection with Census data.

TABLE IV-1
SMITHFIELD RETAIL TRADE 1929-1958

	1929	1939	1948	1954	1958
Sales Volume (\$1,000) % Change per year	2,147			13,795 0.0 +6	
No. of Retail Sales % Change per year				133	
No. of Retail Employees % Change per year				662 3.7 -0	
Retail Payroll (\$1,000) % Change per year				1,382 7.6 +3	

SOURCE: U. S. Census of Business

TABLE IV-2

RETAIL SALES AND ESTABLISHMENTS IN JOHNSTON COUNTY
AND SMITHFIELD 1929-1958

	1929	1939	1948	1954	1958
Sales Volume (\$1,000)					
Johnston County	8,752	7,471	26,752	37,804	44,911
Smithfield	2,147	2,500	8,608	13,795	14,129
Smithfield Share (%)	24.6	33.4	32.2	36.5	31.5
No. of Retail Stores					
Johnston County	439	528	707	573	665
Smithfield	6.2	94	141	133	130
Smithfield Share (%)	14.1	17.8	19.9	23.0	19.8
No. of Retail Employees	3				
Johnston County	458	800	1,344	1,469	1,716
Smithfield	145	3 0 7	559	662	650
Smithfield Share (%)	31.6	38.4	41.5	45,1	37.9
Retail Payroll (\$1,000)	)				
Johnston County	476	544	1,898	2,900	3,635
Smithfield	162	222	879	1,382	1,567
Smithfield Share (%)	34.0	40.9	46.2	47.8	43.0
Smithfield	162	222	879	1,382	1,567

SOURCE: U. S. Census of Business

trades are generally comparable to those in retailing proper in cities like Smithfield, these qualifications are not too serious. Smithfield retail sales have been increasing steadily though at a decreasing rate since 1948. At about the same time the number of retail stores stopped increasing, and has actually decreased slightly since then. This indicates that there has been an increase in the average size of Smithfield stores, which is consistent with trends in the United States as a whole. The recent trends in the numbers and earnings of employees working in these stores also reflect the gradual shift to larger stores, more self-service operation, and more chain stores and fewer independent units, all of which would be expected from national trends. Smithfield is not substantially different in these respects from the rest of Johnston County. The next table shows that the chief difference between Smithfield and Johnston County as a whole, still considering all categories of retail stores together, is that Smithfield stores are larger. Since World War II Smithfield's retail sales volume has been around one-third of the County total, while only one-fifth of the individual store units in the County have been in Smithfield.

There are very substantial differences between different types of stores in sales volume trends and in the other statistics of the kind presented above. These differences are, of course, obscured in the aggregate figures discussed so far. We will now turn to a more detailed analysis of five types of retail stores. These five have been selected because together they include virtually all of the characteristics which differentiate the various types of retailing and commercial services which belong in downtown locations. Stores included in these five categories occupy about two-thirds of all of the retailing floor space in downtown Smithfield. Since they are both generally representative of and constitute a large proportion of downtown retailing as a whole, we can

TABLE IV-3

ANNUAL SALES AND NUMBERS OF STORES IN SELECTED CATEGORIES,

SMITHFIELD AND SMITHFIELD'S SHARES OF

JOHNSTON COUNTY 1948-1958

An	Annual Sales Volume (\$1,000)		Number of Stores			
	1948	1954	1958	1948	1954	1958
Smithfield						
Total*	8,608	13,795	14,129	141	133	130
Gen. Mdse. Stores	948	1,311	1,270(D)	5	11	7
Food Stores	1,494	2,475	2,978	38	29	23
Apparel Stores	672	630	952	10	12	13
Furniture Stores	508	645	669	6	7	9
Drug Stores	192	242	367(D)	4	4	4
Smithfield's Share of Johnston County						
Total*	32.2%	36.5%	31.5%	20%	23%	20%
Gen. Mdse. Stores	15.1%	23.3%	20.0%(D)	7 %	17%	6%
Food Stores	26.5%	29.5%	31.3%	15%	18%	14%
Apparel Stores	55.4%	39.6%	41.7%	38%	33%	28%
Furniture Stores	30.7%	31.2%	26.0%	22%	28%	27%
Drug Stores	24.9%	23.2%	29.0%(D)	22%	20%	22%

NOTES: \* Total includes many store-type categories which are not listed in this table.

SOURCES: Census of Business and Division of Community Planning Estimates.

<sup>(</sup>D) Information withheld by the Census Bureau to prevent possible disclosure of confidential information about a particular business. The figures shown are estimates.

rely on detailed analysis of these categories for conclusions about downtown retailing in general.

The General Merchandise\* category includes department stores (such as Belk's) and variety stores (Roses), and also small general stores which serve rural communities from crossroad locations. Smithfield's share of Johnston County General Merchandise sales increased by more than one-third between 1948 and 1954, and was somewhat lower in 1958.\*\* In the Food Stores category, which includes supermarkets selling a substantial amount of nonfood items, a consistently decreasing number of Smithfield stores have had sales which increased both in absolute terms and as a share of Johnston County food stores' sales. Smithfield's share of the County's sales by stores in the wearing apparel, shoes, and accessories group fell from 55% in 1948 to about 40% in 1954 and 1958, and the number of stores in this category increased faster in the rest of Johnston County than it did in Smithfield. The remaining two of the five selected types of stores, furniture, household furnishings and appliances stores and drug stores show inconclusive trends. However, all of these data refer to relatively small groups of stores observed at three arbitrary points in time, a situation from which clear indications of trends cannot always be discerned. The Census of Business is the only source of firm data of this kind, but the last Census data reported was for 1958, almost five years ago. The conclusion to be drawn from this analysis is that Smithfield stores generally maintained their traditional share

<sup>\*</sup> The category and their names and definitions are taken from the U.S. Census of Business.

<sup>\*\*</sup> Technical problems in the data processing as well as the great change in general economic conditions make it meaningless to carry these comparisons back to 1939 or 1929.

U.S. CENSUS DATA N.C. DEPT. OF REVENUE DATA INDICES OF JOHNSTON COUNTY RETAIL SALES 1948-1963 CURRENT DOLLARS FIG. IV-A 

CONSTANT DOLLARS OF 1961-62 VALUE DEPT. OF REVENUE DATA 9 09 U.S. CENSUS DATA S YEARS 

INDICES

001 = 29 - 1961

of the increasing Johnston County retail sales despite increasing competition from other parts of the County.

Published tabulations of North Carolina sales tax returns provide a continuous series of data on Gross Retail Sales of all Johnston County businesses, which is roughly comparable to the Census of Business figures on Total Retail Sales volumes presented above. The chart on the facing page shows this data, on an annual basis, through June, 1963. Retail sales (the solid black line) have been increasing rather steadily throughout the period, though there have been short-term cyclical fluctuations. These sales volumes are expressed here as index numbers, that is, as percents of the sales in the base year, the fiscal year 1961-62, in order to facilitate comparison with personal income figures.

The median\* income reported by Johnston County families was \$1,496 in 1949 and \$2,469 in 1959, an increase of about 65%. However, the amount of actual goods and services which could be purchased with this median income did not increase by 65%, since prices paid by consumers were, in general, higher in 1959 than in 1949. The effect of inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index, has been such that it would take about \$1,890 in 1961-62 dollars to buy the same amount of the goods and services that \$1,496 would buy in 1949. Similarly, it would take about \$2,550 at 1961-62 values to equal the purchasing power of \$2,469 in 1959. So the real increase in

<sup>\*</sup> The median is a kind of average; it is the income of the family which would be exactly in the middle if all the families were arranged in order from the one with the highest income to the one with the lowest. It is known that the incomes reported to the Census are understated, on the average, by about 25%, but this is of no importance here since we are concerned with relative changes in income rather than their absolute levels.

Johnston County median income over these ten years was not 65% but 35%, as shown by the difference between the red and the black median income lines on the chart. The index of Johnston County retail sales has been adjusted in the same way to separate apparent changes due to inflation from real changes.

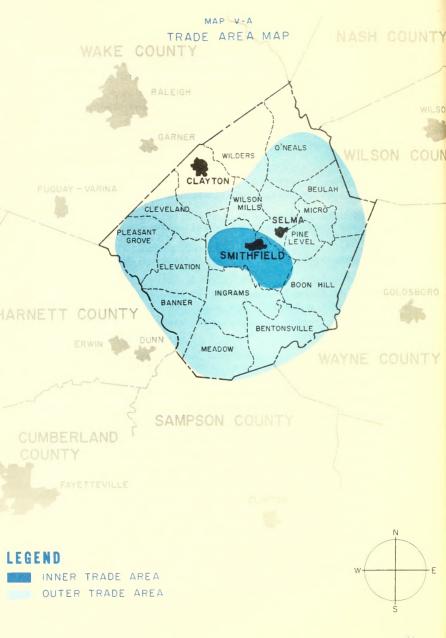
As the graph shows, retail sales have increased faster than the median income, despite the fact that the County population decreased by about 3% during this period. This is contrary to the usual pattern, which is that retail sales increase at a slower rate than income. There seem to be two parts to the explanation of Johnston County's unusual record during the 1501s. One is an effect of the quite low incomes prevalent in the County, the other a result of the rapid shift from farm to nonfarm employment. As incomes increase a smaller proportion of income is spent on necessities, like rent or mortgage payments and food, and a larger proportion on other things, like clothes, savings, life insurance and vacations, Most Americans have incomes high enough so that retailers get a smaller proportion of increases in real income. But it seems that the average Johnston County family has an income so low that a larger proportion of any real increase goes for retail goods and services, because the family cannot afford to put much of the increase into savings, insurance, vacation trips and the like. The number of farmers and farm jobs in the County decreased greatly during the 1950's, while there was an almost equal increase in nonfarm employment. This implies that some food which had been grown of farmers and consumed in their own homes, which is not included in these income figures, was replaced by higher nonfarm wages which were, in part, used to purchase food grown by others. Also, and probably more important, is the fact that people would not have changed from farming to nonfarm employment if they did not expect to get higher real incomes.

### CHAPTER V

## THE FUTURE OF DOWNTOWN SMITHFIELD RETAILING

We have discussed the recent history of retailing in Smithfield and Johnston County, and attempted to find the reasons for the observed changes. We are interested in this history simply because it is prologue to the future. There is no way to know what is going to happen in the future, but we can, within reasonable limits of accuracy, say what will happen if present trends continue. Not all trends point to the same answer, unfortunately, so the analyst has to select those trends which seem most important and combine them into a single coherent set of estimates. This process requires many judgments which are based on experience, and about which therefore there can be disagreement. Rather than just presenting our answers, we will describe the development of these answers in such a way that the reader may, if the does disagree with our judgments, substitute his own and follow through the implications of these to develop an alternative answer.

Implicit in the preceeding chapter is the assumption that Johnston County is the source of Smithfield's retail business. We must now refine and justify this assumption. By definition, a trade area is the geographical area from which a shopping facility obtains most of its business. It is not useful to draw the limits of a trade area so widely as to include the homes of all of those who may occasionally shop in Smithfield, since such an area would be quite unreasonably large. So we have delineated the area from which downtown Smithfield obtains the bulk of its business. We also find it convenient, for reasons which will become apparent later, to divide the entire trade area into two parts, the Inner Trade Area which is close to downtown and the Outer Trade Area which is the doughnut shape surrounding the Inner Trade Area. These are



shown on the map facing this page. It is believed that more than 90% of downtown Smithfield sales are made to ocople who live in these two trade areas. The combination of these areas includes most of Johnston County; all of it except portions of Cleveland, Clayton, Wilders, and O'Neal Townships. This is a far larger area than would be expected simply on the basis of downtown Smithfield's size in relation to the sizes of competitive shopping districts and the distances to these competitive districts. For example, downtown Raleigh is only about 27 miles from Smithfield. Clayton is not much further from Raleigh (15 miles) than it is from Smithfield (12 miles). If Smithfield and Raleigh offered the same depth and variety of merchandise in their respective stores, Clayton residents would tend to go to Smithfield to shop since it is a few minutes closer. But Raleigh does, of course, have far more to offer the shopper than Smithfield because of the much larger size and variety of stores located there. This is not to say that nobody comes from Clayton to Smithfield to shop: we know that this is not true. But we are including such people among the 10% or less who come from beyond the limits drawn on the map.

Reilly's Law, a commonly used mathematical formulation of the interrelationship of distance from and size of competitive shopping facilities, would indicate that the Smithfield trade area only extends about  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles along U.S. 70 toward Raleigh, while we believe that it extends about 10 miles in that direction. There are similar situations to the northeast and the east of Smithfield, where the trade area extends roughly half-way to the much larger retailing complexes in Wilson and Goldsboro. The reasons for this disproportionate attraction to Smithfield are difficult to analyze, because they are intangible matters like tradition and loyalty and the appropriateness of a retailing facility to the tastes of

a particular kind of clientele. Smithfield has traditionally been the dominant shopping center in the County, as we have seen.

This history tends to support its own continuation in the present and future -- nothing succeeds like success -- particularly where there are few newcomers to an area. But a loyalty developed over time is not a certain basis of support for a shopping district; witness the rather abrupt decline of Selma, and the rapid acceptance of Raleigh's Cameron Village. Another, probably more important, part of the explanation of Smithfield's disproportionate attraction is the network of interactions discussed earlier; the interrelationships between the various nonretail activities like the governmental and professional offices, banks, and so on, and the shopping facilities encourage people to shop in Smithfield during a visit which is primarily made for some other reason. In North Carolina the county seats are often the largest towns and the dominant retailing centers in their counties, though there are many exceptions, Tarboro, Nashville, Hillsboro, and Graham, for example. A third element in the explanation is that the goods and services available in Smithfield are particularly adapted to the needs and tastes of a predominantly rural population, as opposed to the more urban orientation of the facilities in Raleigh.

In order to make projections of sales to the trade area residents we need a set of population projections for the trade area. These have been derived from a series of Johnston County projections. To make the County projections, the population has been divided into small groups, each of which is of the same sex and race and within a five-year span of ages. It is assumed that each such group will experience the same mortality, the same rate of migration, and, for women, will bear children at the same rate as did the comparable

TABLE V-1
TRADE AREA POPULATIONS
1950-1980

		Population					
	1950	1960	1970	1980			
Outer Trade Area	43,947	43,952	40,300	34,000			
Inner Trade Area	10,148	11,142	11,200	12,000			
Total Trade Area	54,095	55,094	51,500	46,000			
Smithfield Town	5,574	6,117	6,500	7,000			
Johnston County	65,096	62,936	58,200	53,100			

	P e	ercent Change	
	1950-60	1960-70	1970-80
Outer Trade Area	0	-8.3%	-15.6%
Inner Trade Area	+9.9%	0	+ 7.1%
Total Trade Area	+1.8%	-6.5%	-10.6%
Smithfield Town	+9.7%	+6.3%	+ 7.7%
Johnston County	-3.3%	-7.5%	- 8.8%

SOURCE: U. S. Census, Division of Community Planning estimates and projections. Percents may not correspond exactly to projections because of rounding.

group between 1950 and 1960. For example, the group of white women who were 25 to 30 years old in 1960 are expected to survive, move to or from the area, and have children at the same rates as did those who were 25 to 30 in 1950. Those of the white women who were 25 to 30 in 1960 and are expected to survive and have their residence in the area in 1970 will then be expected to experience the mortality, migration, and fertility rates between 1970 and 1980 as did those white women who were 45 to 50 in 1950 between 1950 and 1960. These assumptions are based on the fact that most of the changes in over-all vital rates (for example, those which relate births to all women rather than to women of particular ages) are due to changes in the age structure and racial composition of populations, rather than to changes in actual be-

The table opposite shows estimated 1950 and 1960 trade area populations and their projections, and also, for comparison, the same figures for the City of Smithfield and for Johnston County.

The outer trade area population must decrease sharply if the County population decreases by almost one-sixth between 1960 and 1980 while the Smithfield City and Township (the inner trade area) populations are increasing slightly. These trends are consistent with the observed trends from farm to service trades employment and from rural to urban residence, trends which are to be found in most of the county are are particularly pronounced in Johnston County. Smithfield businessmen face a decrease in the population of their trade area despite some growth in the immediately surrounding suburbs.

Per capita incomes in Johnston County showed an increase, after adjustment for inflation, of 35% between 1949 and 1959.

The more-than-proportionate increase in County and City retail sales, which we discussed earlier, and the more-than-proportionate increase in per capita expenditures which these imply, will certainly not continue indefinitely. We will project per capita expenditures at the observed rate of increase in real income to roughly the current North Carolina level of income and expenditures, and at about three-fourths of the projected rate of increase in real income beyond that point. It must be emphasized, however, that this is a very optimistic assumption. The Median Income table opposite shows the wide differences between the two divisions of the trade area, and between the County and State.

TABLE V-2

Outer Trade Area	\$2,100
Inner Trade Area	3,150
Smithfield City	\$3,704
Johnston County	2,469
North Carolina	3,956

SOURCES: 1960 Census of Population, Division of Community Planning estimates.

With the population, real income, and rate of change in per capita total expenditures projections, we can return to the five selected categories of retail stores and develop estimates of their sales volumes. From census data we can obtain per capita expenditures in each of these five kinds of stores for North Carolina as a whole. These are then adjusted

because of the differences in income levels and consumption patterns between the Smithfield trade areas and the State average. These adjustments are partly judgmental, based on observation of Smithfield stores and their trade area, experience of comparable areas elsewhere, and published studies of rural and small city consumption patterns. The resulting estimates, and the steps which follow, are shown in the four tables which form the appendix to this chapter. The 1958 table in this series constitutes a mathematical model which can be checked against the known results provided by the Census of Business. Thus it is essentially a check on the judgments and assumptions of the analyst, including delineation of the trade area and all of the subsequent steps. Having shown that this model of consumer behavior does correspond to reality, insofar as the reality can be known, we may proceed to apply similar judgments to estimate the unknown present, 1964, and the future, 1970 and 1980, sales.

The steps shown in the appendix tables are as follows: the population in a trade area times per capita expenditures in a given type of store equals the gross sales potential for all of the stores of this type which serve the trade area. No single shopping area can expect to capture all of this sales potential, however. Some of these expenditures by trade area residents will be made outside of the Smithfield trade areas in Raleigh, Goldsboro, Wilson, Dunn, Clayton, and other places whose trade areas overlap those of Smithfield, and in more distant places like Richmond, Charlotte, and resort towns. The "Trade Area Share", shown in the appendix tables, is the percentage of trade area residents! expenditures which are made within the Smithfield Trade Area. The "Smithfield Downtown Share" is the difference between the "Trade Area Share" and the expenditures in the other towns within the trade area and in Smithfield stores outside of downtown. The "Smithfield Downtown Sales" are the trade area residents! expenditures reduced by these two shares. The sum of the estimated sales to residents of each of the two trade areas is taken as a low estimate of the sales volume for each of the selected types of stores. Since the trade areas were delineated so as to exclude as much as 10% of total sales, and since the other judgments used tend to be on the optimistic side, we have added 10% to the low estimate to get an estimate which is expected to be on the high side.

The low and high estimates of the aggregate sales of downtown Smithfield stores in each of the selected categories are also shown in the table on the opposite page. Comparison of these estimates and the actual results as published in the 1958 Census of Business shows that the estimates are as close as can be expected. The sales of particular types of stores do fluctuate from year to year more than the total of all types of stores. The fluctuations in this total may be seen on the chart facing page . In making ten and twenty year projections one must concentrate on the long-term trend, ignoring yearly fluctuations. Data for two of the selected categories, General Merchandise and Drug Stores, could not be reported by the Bureau of the Census because of the disclosure of establishment problems; our estimates for these categories do compare favorably with estimates derived by a very different methodology.

Both the "Trade Area Share" and the "Downtown Smithfield Share" are expected to change, in some cases, between 1963 and 1980. For example, in the Inner Trade Area the Trade Area Share for the Apparel category is expected to drop from 80% to 75%, because there will be more "high fashion" shopping as incomes increase, and Smithfield is far too small to capture a large share of this trade.

TABLE V-3
ESTIMATED SALES VOLUMES OF SELECTED TYPES OF STORES
IN DOWNTOWN SMITHFIELD 1958-1980

Тур	es of Stores	General Merchandise	Food Stores and Supermarkets	Wearing Apparel, Shoes and Accessories	Furniture, Household Furnishings, and Appliances	Drug Stores
1958	Low Estimate High Estimate Census Results*	\$ 1,220,000 1,340,000 (D)	\$ 2,490,000 2,740,000 2,978,000	\$ 875,000 962,000 952,000	\$ 610,000 670,000 669,000	\$ 320,000 350,000 (D)
1963	Low Estimate High Estimate	1,600,000 1,760,000	3,350,000	1,110,000	760,000 840,000	420,000 460,000
1970**	Low Estimate High Estimate	1,830,000 2,01 <del>0</del> ,000	3,400,000	1,340,000	780,000 860,000	490,000 540,000
1980**	Low Estimate High Estimate	2,520,060 2,770,000	4,350,000	1,680,000 1,850,000	1,020,000	670,000 740,000

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Notes: (D) Data withheld by Bureau of the Census to prevent disclosure of confidential information.

- \* These figures include stores in the Town of Smithfield but outside of the downtown area.
- \*\* Projections are in terms of 1963 value of the dollar.

TABLE V-4

# REQUIRED FLOOR SPACE FOR SELECTED TYPES OF STORES IN DOWNTOWN SMITHFIELD 1963 AND 1980

Types of Stores		General Merchandise	Food Stores and Supermarkets	Wearing Apparel, Shoes and Accessories	Furniture, Household Furnishings, and Appliances	Drug Stores
Normal Floor Space Productivity (Dollars of Annual Sales per Square Foot)		55	110	5.5	50	5 5
Required Floor Area 1963	Low Est. High Est.	29,000	30,400 33,600	20,200	15,200 16,800	7,600 8,400
Required Floor Area 1980	Low Est. High Est,	45,800 49,000	39,500 43,600	30,600	20,400	12,200 13,500
Actual Floor Space, 1963		54,800	31,700	42,100	46,200	9,300
Surplus (Deficit) of Existing Space Over	High Est.	25,800	1,300	21,900	31,000	1,700
1963 Requirements	Low Est.	22,800	(-1,900)	19,900	29,400	900
Surplus (Deficit) of 1963 Existing Space	High Est.	9,000	(-7,800)	11,500	25,800	(-2,900)
Over 1980 Requirements	Low Est.	5,800	(-11,900)	8,500	23,800	(-4,200)

The largest increases in sales volumes with 1980 sales more than twice as large as those of 1963 are expected to be in the Drug Store and the General Merchandise categories. The drug stores will benefit most, of the selected categories, from the population growth in the Inner Trade Area and in downtown Smithfield employment, since they serve a convenient shopping function. Variety and department stores will get higher sales from higher personal incomes and the trend from small convenience-type general merchandise stores to much larger units which provide far better selections and also better prices. Sales in the Apparel and Furniture groups will increase by about two-thirds to three-fourths during the 1963 and 1980 forecast period, deriving a less-than-proportional benefit from higher personal income because of increasingly effective competition both within and outside of the trade area. There will probably be some decentralization of supermarkets from downtown to outlying locations in Smithfield, which will reduce downtown Food Stores sales below what would otherwise be expected.

The function of the retail sales volume model is to provide a basis for projection of downtown floor space. There is a fairly predictable relationship between floor space and sales volume for any given type of store, though individual stores may operate at substantially higher or lower sales-persquare foot levels. The figures shown in the next table are typical satisfactory operating levels for the various types of stores selected for detailed analysis. Stores in older and less efficient buildings, which would also demand relatively low rents, may achieve satisfactory profits at considerably lower levels; conversely, the minimum sales-per-square foot levels for capably managed stores in a good modern shopping center are from 15% to 25% higher, depending on the type of store, than those shown on the table opposite. The

TABLE V-5

EXISTING AND PROJECTED FLOOR SPACE
FOR OOWNTOWN RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL SERVICES
(Floor Space in Square Feet)

		Total of Five Selected Store Types	All Downtown Retail and Services	Percent of Existing (1963) Space
Existing Floor Space		184,100	270,000	100%
Required Floor Area	Low Est.	102,400	150,000	56%
1963	High Est.	113,000	166,000	61%
Required Floor Area	Low Est.	148,500	218,000	81%
1980	High Est.	162,100	238,000	88%
Surplus of Existing Space	High Est.	81,700	120,000	44%
over 1963 Requirements	Low Est.	71,100	104,000	39%
Surplus of Existing (1963)	High Est.	35,600	52,000	19%
Space Over 1980 Requirement	Low Est.	22,000	32,000	12%

dividing the sales volume estimates by the "Normal Floor Space Productivity" for each type of store. The amount of efficiently utilized floor area which would be required to achieve the projected sales volume is, in most cases, substantially smaller than the floor space presently in use. The only exception on the 1963 line is in the Food Stores category. The current space deficit is far smaller than the minimum size for a competitive supermarket, but there is an obvious opportunity for a new store on the south side of Smithfield to capture part of the trade currently enjoyed by the downtown supermarket. By 1980 there will no doubt be either another new supermarket or replacement of one of the existing ones with a substantially larger unit. There is also going to be additional drug store space, probably within the next five years. Depending on the size and location of this, there may by 1980 again be need for additional drug store space in downtown Smithfield.

The five categories were selected for detailed analysis for a number of reasons, but the most important criterion was that they together be fairly representative of the full range of downtown retailing and commercial services. Thus, we will use the five in aggregate to reach conclusions about the total commercial floor space requirements in 1980. The numerical conclusions from this analysis are shown on the table opposite. As this shows, the 1963 sales volume could be reached in not more than three-fifths of the 270,000 square feet of space currently in use for retailing and commercial services. Even if sales increase sharply, as projected, to 1980, these sales could be attained easily in 10% to 20% less space than is in use today.

Though there will be no appreciable net growth in occupied retailing space in downtown Smithfield before the 1980's, there will be new construction. There are, of course, current examples of new store construction in downtown. The reason for this new construction is to provide modern facilities for businesses which are more profitable in relatively new, modern space at high rents, than in low rent, obsolete buildings. The location of this new construction can either strengthen or hurt downtown Smithfield as a whole. If new stores are built on the fringe of downtown there will eventually be vacancies in downtown, and the existing downtown stores which remain in the retailing core area will not benefit much from the customer traffic generated by the new stores. This works both ways, of course; the new stores in fringe locations will not benefit from the traffic generated by those in the core. If, on the other hand, existing obsolete buildings are razed to make way for new construction, potentially vacant and blighting structures will be removed and the new stores and those which now exist in the core will all benefit. We will return to this problem later, in the Development Plan, and

again in the final chapter which discusses means of implementing the plan.

The retail sales projections to 1970 and 1980 assume that the plan will be carried out aggressively and effectively, in concept and intention if not in every detail. These projections also assume that no unusual new competition will develop in the trade area during the forecast period. These two assumptions are closely related; if the first is fulfilled the second will be true. There are two forms which unusual new competition might take. One is the conventional shopping center, serving a regional market from a location which would probably be at Interstate 95 on either U.S. 70, U.S. 70A, or the proposed U.S. 70 Bypass. The other possibility is a true one-store shopping center in or on the edge of Smithfield. We are not aware of any precedent for this is the southeastern United States, but there is ample evidence of these in New England and other parts of the country and all of the necessary conditions are found or could develop in Smithfield. What is required for housing such an operation is a very large expanse of floor space, tens of thousands of square feet, preferably on one level, which can be acquired at a low price. This permits operation of a full-line supermarket as well as the whole range of departments found in variety and department stores, including appliances and perhaps furniture, all of which are operated on a low overhead, largely self-service basis. In New England such stores are typically found in vacant textile mill buildings; here tobacco warehouses might serve the same function. Either kind of development would have to depend on taking most of its business from the existing stores by aggressive merchandising and provision of better conveniences for the customer. The best defense against such competition is to provide a high degree of shopping convenience before such competition is proposed.

TABLE V-5
SALES ESTIMATES - SELECTED TYPES OF STORES - 1958

	Totals	General Merchandise	Food Stores and Supermarkets	Wearing Apparel & Shoes	Furniture, Appliances & Household Goods	Drug Stores
Outer Trade Area Population	43,950					
Per Capita Expenditures Trade Area Sales Potential	\$ 255	\$ 65 \$ 2,850,000	\$ 115 \$ 5,050,000	\$ 30 \$ 1,320,000	\$ 25 \$ 1,100,000	\$ 15 \$ 660,000
Trade Area Share Smithfield Downtown Share		7 5% 2 0%	95% 20%	7 0% 5 0%	7 0 % 4 5 %	9 0% 2 5%
Smithfield Downtown Sales		\$ 430,000	\$ 960,000	\$ 460,000	\$ 350,000	\$ 150,000
Inner Trade Area Population	10,950					
Per Capita Expenditures Trade Area Sales Potential	\$ 390	\$ 95	\$ 175 \$ 1,920,000	\$ 50 \$ 550,000	\$ 45	\$ 25 \$ 270,000
Trade Area Share Smithfield Downtown Share		80% 95%	100% 80%	80% 95%	7 5% 7 0%	90% 75%
Smithfield Downtown Sales		\$ 790,000	\$ 1,530,000	\$ 415,000	\$ 260,000	\$ 170,000
Total Trade Area Smithfield Downtown Sales Low Estimate High Estimate		\$ 1,220,000 1,340,000	\$ 2,490,000	\$ 875,000 962,000		\$ 320,000
1958 Census Smithfield Sales		(D)	\$ 2,978,000	\$ 952,000	\$ 669,000	350,000 (D)

NOTE: (D)=Information withheld by Sureau of Census to prevent disclosure of confidential answers of individual businesses.

TABLE V-5 (Con't.)

SALES ESTIMATES - SELECTED STORE TYPES - 1963

	Totals	General Merchandise	Food Stores and Supermarkets	Wearing Apparel & Shoes	Furniture, Appliances & Household Goods	Drug Stores
Outer Trade Area Population	42,850					
Per Capita Expenditures Trade Area Sales Potential	\$ 335	\$ 85 \$ 3,640,000	\$ 155 \$ 6,630,000	\$ 40 \$ 1,710,000	\$ 35 \$ 1,500,000	\$ 20 \$ 850,000
Trade Area Share Smithfield Cowntown Share		7 5% 2 0%	95% 20%	70% 50%	70% 45%	90% 25%
Smithfield Cowntown Sales		\$ 550,000	\$ 1,250,000	\$ 600,000	\$ 470,000	\$ 190,000
Population	11,150					
Per Capita Expenditures Trade Area Sales Potential	\$ 505	\$ 125	\$ 240 \$ 2,700,000	\$ 60 ,000	\$ 50 \$ 560,000	\$ 30
Trade Area Share Smithfield Downtown Share		80% 95%	100%	80% 95%	75% 70%	90% 75%
Smithfield Downtown Sales		\$ 1,050,000	\$ 2,100,000	\$ 510,000	\$ 290,000	\$ 230,000
Total Trade Area Smithfield Downtown Sales Low Estimate High Estimate		\$ 1,600,000 1,760,000	\$ 3,350,000 3,700,000	\$ 1,110,000	\$ 760,000 B40,000	\$ 420,000 460,000

### TABLE V-5 (Con't.) SALES ESTIMATES - SELECTED STORE TYPES - 1970

	Totals	General Herchandise	Food Stores and Supermarkets	Wearing Apparel & Shoes	Furniture, Appliances & Household Goods	Drug Stores
Outer Trade Area  Fopulation  Per Capita Expenditures  Trade Area Sales Potential  Trade Area Share  Smithfield Downtown Share  Smithfield Downtown Sales	40,300 \$ 415	\$ 105 \$ 4,200,000 75% 20% \$ 630,000	\$ 195 \$ 7,900,000 95% 20% \$ 1,500,000	\$ 50 \$ 2,000,000 70% 50% \$ 700,000	\$ 40 \$ 1,600,000 702 402 \$ 450,000	\$ 25 \$ 1,000,000 90% 25% \$ 230,000
Inner Trade Area Population Per Capita Expenditures Trade Area Sales Potential Trade Area Share Smithfield Downtown Share Smithfield Downtown Sales	11,200 \$ 610	\$ 155 \$ 1,700,000 75% 95% \$ 1,200,000	\$ 280 \$ 3,100,000 100% 60% \$ 1,900,000	\$ 80 \$ 900,000 75% 95% \$ 640,000	75% 65%	\$ 35 \$ 390,000 90% 75% \$ 260,000
Total Trade Area Smithfield Downtown Sales Low Estimate High Estimate		\$ 1,830,000 2,010,000	\$ 3,400,000 3,700,000	\$ 1,340,000 1,470,000	\$ 780,000 860,000	\$ 490,000 540,000

TABLE V-5 (Con't.)

SALES ESTIMATES - SELECTED STORE TYPES - 1980

	Totals	General Merchandise	Food Stores and Supermarkets	Wearing Apparel & Shoes	Furniture, Appliances & Household Goods	Drug Stores
Outer Trade Area Population	34,000					
Per Capita Expenditures Trade Area Sales Potential	\$ 555	\$ 140 \$ 4,800,000	\$ 255 \$ 8,700,000	\$ 70 \$ 2,400,000	\$ 55 \$ 1,900,000	\$ 35
Trade Area Share Smithfield Downtown Share		7 5% 2 0%	95% 20%	70% 50%	7 0% 4 0%	90% 25%
Smithfield Downtown Sales		\$ 720,000	\$ 1,650,000	\$ 830,000	\$ 520,000	\$ 270,000
Inner Trade Area Population	12,000					
Per Capita Expenditures Trade Area Sales Potential	\$ 815	\$ 210 \$ 2,500,000	\$ 370 \$ 4,500,000	\$ 100 \$ 1,200,000	\$ 85 \$ 1,000,000	\$ 50 \$ 600,000
Trade Area Share Smithfield Downtown Share		7.5% 9.5%	100% 60%	7.5% 9.5%	7 5% 6 5%	9 0% 7 5%
Smithfield Downtown Sales		\$ 1,800,000	\$ 2,700,000	\$ 850,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 400,000
Total Trade Area Smithfield Downtown Sales						
Low Estimate High Estimate		\$ 2,520,000	\$ 4,350,000 4,800,000	\$ 1,680,000 1,850,000	\$ 1,020,000 1,120,000	\$ 670,000 740,000

#### CHAPTER VI PARKING

The greatest single deficiency in downtown Smithfield is the lack of adequate parking for customers and other visitors. There are other kinds of parking required in a downtown area; all-day parking for employees, reserved spaces close to the place of work of those who may have to use their cars during their working days, parking for residents of the area, etc. These are, in general, satisfactorily provided for now. More efficient use of the space currently devoted to these functions and use of the spaces currently reserved for customers but clearly inappropriate for use by shoppers and visitors will provide enough spaces to take care of increases in these noncustomer requirements.

It is important to have enough parking spaces for customers, and it is equally important that these be easily accessible, convenient, and attractive. On the following pages there is a map and a table analyzing the existing supply of parking space in downtown Smithfield. The tabulation shows that there are a total of over 1,700 spaces within a few blocks of downtown. Most of these are either reserved for employees or are not restricted in any way and are generally premptied by employees during business hours. Of the 600 spaces which are reserved for customers, either by meters or signs, 48% are located so as to serve the core retailing area, 45% serve the relatively small amount of retail space outside of the core but within downtown, and 7% are too far from any retail facility to be convenient for customers. There are more spaces in the Winn-Dixie convenience shopping center lot than there are off-street spaces serving visitors to the retailing core.

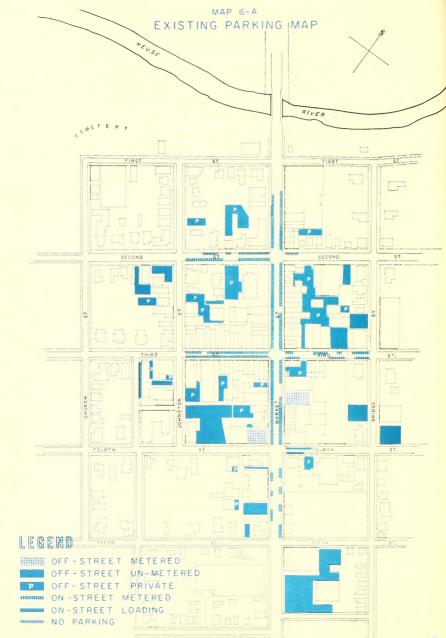


TABLE - VI-1
EXISTING PARKING SUPPLY

	Numbers of Spaces				
Reserved For Customers	Off-Street Lots	On-Street Meters	Total		
Within 300 Feet of Core Retail Frontage	134	149	283		
Serving Retail Facilities Close to the Core Area	2 5 7	11	268		
Others	22	19	41		
Subtotal	413	179	592		
Reserved For Employees	Off-Street Lots 223		<u>Total</u> 223		
Not Reserved	Off-Street Lots	On-Street Spaces-No Meters	Total		
Within 300 Feet of Core Retail Frontage	1 2	98	110		
Others	149	665	814		
Subtotal	161	7 63	924		
All Spaces	797	942	1,739		

SOURCE: Field Survey, May 1963

NOTE: See Map, "Existing Parking", for boundaries of area surveyed and locations of spaces.

In a city the size of Smithfield parking spaces which are more than about three hundred feet from good retail frontage are not convenient enough to be considered adequate customer parking. Although distance is the only criterion of convenience used in the map and tabulation, there are other considerations which are equally important in judging convenience and adequacy. An off-street lot must be large enough to give a high probability of finding a vacant space in it even when it is virtually full at peak business periods. It must also be reasonably large and well-marked if it is to be noticed, remembered, and used by people who are not intimately familiar with downtown Smithfield. Lots which are too small, or which have narrow or twisting entrances tend to be avoided by women. These lots convey an impression that they are difficult to maneuver cars in, that they would be dirty and full of garbage cans and maybe even loitering, unsavory characters. None of this may be true, but if this is the initial impression from the street, few shoppers will ever discover the truth. This does not mean that parking lots have to be right on the street but their entrances do have to be visible from a street, and they must present a clean, attractive appearance. Such an appearance and efficient use of the land require that parking lots for customers be paved and that circulation aisles and individual stalls be clearly marked. No merchant would allow the sidewalk in front of his store to remain unpaved yet many in Smithfield expect their customers to get out of their cars and walk through dust or mud and wheel ruts to reach the sidewalk.

Of the 134 off-street, customer parking spaces presently serving the retail core, only 92 meet very minimal standards of adequacy, and virtually all of these 92 have serious deficiencies. There are also about 150 metered, on-street parking spaces serving the same function. Such spaces do fulfill a

need, but this is not the best kind of parking for shoppers. The arbitrary two-hour time limit and fear of getting a ticket discourages leisurely shopping, and many women avoid parallel parking because they find it difficult.

The amount of parking which should be provided for customers may be estimated from the required floor space projections. A reasonable goal for the near future is an index of 4.0 spaces per 1000 square feet of retailing space, but if present trends in car ownership and usage continue, it will be necessary to provide parking at an index of about 6.0 by 1980. The meaning of such a parking index may be visualized by comparison with the development which includes the Winn-Dixie, which has an index of about 6.4, not counting nearby curb spaces.

The table on the following page shows that at least 600 customer spaces, or some 350 more than presently exist, should be provided as quickly as possible. At the same time the existing off-street customer parking should be upgraded, or, where this is not feasible, they should be used for employee or other parking purposes and replaced by adequate spaces elsewhere. By 1980 there should be about 1300 spaces available to customers. Recommendations for the location of this parking will be shown along with the Development Plan, and means of achieving these recommendations will be discussed in the final chapter.

As we explained earlier, present provisions for all-day parking are adequate, both quantitatively and qualitatively, although minimal improvement of many of the employee parking areas would permit them to accommodate more cars. It is not reasonable to expect all-day parkers to walk several blocks to their destinations; therefore, on-street parking on the nearby streets, outside of the core area, may be used for this purpose.

TABLE VI-2
REQUIRED PARKING FOR CUSTOMERS IN RETAIL CORE AREA

		1963	1980-
Required Retail Floor Space (Square Feet)	Low Est. High Est.	150,000 166,000	218,000 238,000
Proposed Parking Index*		4.0	6.0
Total Customer Parking Spaces Required	Low Est. High Est.	600 665	1,300 1,450
Effective Supply of On-Street Metered Spaces		150	
Remainder to be Provided in Off-Street Lots (Spaces)	Low Est. High Est.	450 515	
Existing, Adequate, Off-Street Parking Serving Retail Core (Spaces)		92	
Deficit	Low Est. High Est.	3 5 8 4 2 3	

<sup>\*</sup> Spaces per 1,000 square feet of floor space.

## CHAPTER VII OTHER DOWNTOWN ACTIVITIES

Retailing and trades are, and will continue to be, the largest single group of activities in the downtown area. The Existing Downtown Activities Map, which appears in Chaper IX shows the present predominance of Primary, Secondary Service, Wholesale Trades, Office and Institutional Uses of Land within the eight blocks between First and Eighth Streets along either side of Market. But downtown is, and should be, more than just a shopping center. The presence in the same area of governmental, professional, banking, and similar activities has contributed to the present dominance of downtown Smithfield and, to a considerable degree, has contributed to the continued growth and relative prosperity of the town as a whole despite the adverse economic factors affecting Johnston County. These and other activities do have a definite place in the future downtown of Smithfield, but they must not be indiscriminately mixed through the core area. One of the serious defects of downtown as it exists now is the illogical pattern of functions which has developed. We have learned the benefits of separating different kinds of traffic by providing appropriate kinds of roads to serve different functions; the Interstate for long distance traffic, direct highways for movement to towns, collector streets within residential areas, and so on. The same principle of separating functions so that one does not interfere with the other, which works to the advantage of all functions, applies to land use within downtown. The retail core should be an area with a compact and contiguous frontage to maximize shopper interaction between stores and thus the attraction of shoppers to downtown Smithfield.

Office functions -- administrative, financial and professional -- need downtown locations and are essential to the balance of

activities and services which gives downtown its distinctive character. These should be adjacent to but not right in the retail frontage. They should be one step removed from it. either vertically to a second floor location, or horizontally to the edge of the retail frontage. (Banks are a special case here; in locational characteristics they are more like stores than offices.) Administrative and Financial land uses occupied about 65,000 square feet of floor space in 1963, and this is expected to increase by about one-half, to between 90,000 and 100,000 square feet in 1980. The population served by these office functions is not increasing, but the number and variety of public and private services has been increasing steadily, and this trend will undoubtedly continue. These will be housed in relatively small offices, with the exception of the banks, as there is no reason to anticipate location of any significantly large headquarters office in Smithfield.

The requirements and locational characteristics for visitor and customer parking were discussed in the preceding chapter. These parking areas are represented graphically in relation to the other land uses of the core in Chapter IX, Map IX-E.

There is now a variety of agricultural and automotive sales and service functions located in and around the downtown core area. These also require a central, easily accessible location, but they do not require locations in the core area. These warehouses, repair shops, gas stations and the like are incompatible with the core functions which require close pedestrian interaction, and each adversely affects the other. These uses have tended to develop to the east of the core area, and this trend should be encouraged and reinforced by a clear separation at Fourth Street. The fringe of the downtown core is an appropriate location for churches and other institutional functions which require a central location but

do not require or generate intensive interaction with other downtown activities. The existing churches at Fourth and Johnston and at Second and Market are good examples of such location, and other such sites are available.

There is no need, and no place, for housing within downtown Smithfield, since the downtown area is only a few blocks wide and the neighborhoods surrounding the core can better serve the needs of those who will want to live close to downtown.



#### CHAPTER VIII

#### VISUAL IMAGE OF DOWNTOWN

In creating a physical environ for its citizens, the municipality has the obligation to provide beauty as well as basic utility. Streets, facades and publicly maintained open spaces should not merely be functional, safe and well-cared for, but more. These municipal entities should also be pleasant to behold, appropriate in their expressions and in possession of such characteristics which would reflect the heritage of the past and the aspiration of the future. In short, whatever meets the public eyes ought to be a visual asset as well. Conversely, image that may be harmful to a community should be identified and remedied.

Why should a community strive for urban beauty? Many reasons come to mind. There are the economic reasons, of course.

Unkempt and shabby appearance of a town is a certain deterrent to the growth, be it industrial, commercial or otherwise.

The real estate value is inclined to decrease; hence, a potential drop in local tax revenue. Associated with other symptoms of blight, a sub-par visual appearance in downtown is known to hasten the decline of the retail and service potential of that core area. But above all, there are those intangible psychological reasons which cannot be gaged in terms of dollars and cents -- community pride, for instance; care or concern of public properties that is above and beyond the call of a citizen's duty, is another example.

Physical beauty of a community, especially at its focal point — the downtown core area — is often the manifestation of intense civic pride. Aware of the image that the sight, sound and smell of the downtown core may exude to the outside world, aware of the opportunity and fortune the community may attract with a favorably impressive central business district, and

aware of the potential assets or resources of the community that may serve to strengthen the positive aspects of its urban image, the prideful citizens would join hands and proceed to create an environment that reflects that collective aspirations of all the participants. Such a creation is not the work of one man, although one man may impede or even turn back the progress; nor can the goals of the plan be achieved in one swift action. In the midst of the everchanging urban scenes, it takes all concerned to work out, to revise and to implement various elements of a flexible plan over a period of many years.

Judging from the concrete efforts already expended and by the honors already received in the nationwide contests, it is quite evident that Smithfield is a city of great community pride. Under the impetus of the "Smithfield Plan" currently in progress, the community would undoubtedly progress further. But the effort must not stop at mere beautification, for beautification implies only skin-deep treatment, whereas urban beauty in its truest sense is an outward manifestation of urban health -- the proper functioning of all its component parts and so, instead of a one shot treatment, planning for downtown Smithfield should be a long term process.

To the traveling public, each community presents an image of its own, be it unfavorable, or indifferent. Some towns seem shabby and generally uninviting, while some others exude charm and accommodation. As has been explained previously, these first impressions gained have important bearings to a community's future and certainly cast a reflection of the public spirit and local pride. What kind of a public image is Smithfield's downtown likely to present? What are some of the existing elements around which attractive urban setting can be created? What are some of the eyesores that Smithfield can do without? Below is such a catalogue of these visual

assets and defects that downtown Smithfield currently pos-

- DOWNTOWN CANOPIES. Since their installation over a year ago, the canopies along store fronts on Market and Third Streets proved to be a complete success. The retail potential in the core area has been greatly strengthened by this innovation. Additional measures should be those which would enhance the success which was wrought by rendering features of convenience to pedestrians who are prime users of downtown.
- THE COURTHOUSE AND ITS PRECINCTS. This charming complex of the public buildings, the surrounding greeneries, the professional offices and pedestrian pathways collectively lend the immediate neighborhood a certain air of urbanity that is hard to come by for a small urban center of this size; nor can such loveliness be created at will without a feeling of being contrived. This precinct should therefore be carefully conserved and protected from the other types of activities (such as drive-ins, supermarkets, garish signs, etc.) that may be detrimental to this atmosphere.
- THE LAND OCCUPIED BY THE MAINTENANCE YARD. Though lying just outside of what is commonly regarded as the downtown area, the block bounded by First, Johnston, Second and Church Streets is also given consideration due to its close proximity. In the midst of a fine residential district, this tract of land currently houses the County's maintenance equipment. It could be more profitably used for other more befitting activities, such as: housing for the aged, an art gallery, or other similar types of institutional uses.

- MORE LAND FOR INSTITUTIONAL USES. The two blocks bounded by First, Bridge, Second, and Johnston Streets at the western part of the downtown may be used for more professional offices, clubs, and other public or semi-public types of activities in the future. The tobacco warehouse and the adjacent row of commercial buildings should be removed in order to make way for new constructions. The canopies, the new department stores and other improvements further down the street tend to make the above mentioned structures appear as eyesores. Strategically located as a gateway to the downtown from the north, their early removal is most opportune.
- TOBACCO WAREHOUSES. There are currently within the confines of downtown Smithfield three or four sizeable tobacco warehouses. Visually, they are as unsightly as they are structurally and functionally obsolete. Haven for vermin, these buildings present themselves as constant sources of fire hazards as well as blighting influence to their neighbors. Often located at or near the "One Hundred Percent Block" these warehouses timely removal would be a boom to the future development of downtown Smithfield.
- THROUGH TRAFFIC. Downtown Smithfield currently is traversed by one of the most heavily used highways in Eastern Carolina -- U. S. 70. According to the State Highway Commission, the annual average daily figure (A.A.D.T.) along Market Street reached a high of 9,400 in 1962. The Commission further estimated that the traffic figure will increase at a rate of 5% to 10% each year. It is safe to assume therefore, that the current traffic volume has long since past the 10,000 mark. Through

traffic -- traffic not destined for downtown -represents a sizeable portion of that number.

Smithfield remains to be one of the few communities in the State that does not provide alternate routes to bypass such traffic. The lack of
such a provision is recognized as one of the most
important factors that causes the decline of
downtowns elsewhere. Currently, however, Smithfield's downtown is thriving despite of its pres-

The presence of the heavy vehicular traffic, passenger and trucking, which are ever eager to "resume safe speed," can be distinctly felt in the downtown area. The deafening roar of the diesel engines, the revving of motors and the screeching of tires are all due to the stop and go downtown traffic. Such raucousness are most unbecoming for the core of any community where pedestrian presumably is the king. The atmosphere generated, is not compatible with the image of urbanity which the town strives to create. It is doubtful that the revived retail and service trades in the downtown area today can indefinitely endure such intrusion.

Long-range plans should be drawn up to alleviate this harmful intrusion.\* Meanwhile, the developmental proposals within this study are made, under the assumption that there will be longe-range proposals made, adopted and carried out by the proper authorities.

<sup>\*</sup> The details of the plan will be discussed in <a href="Smithfield">Smithfield</a>
<a href="Land Development Plan">Land Development Plan</a>, published concurrently with this study.

- UNPAVED PARKING LOTS. As being pointed out earlier, the parking problem in the downtown area is not so much lacking in number of spaces as in the over-all quality of the spaces provided. Parking lots, with the outstanding exception of the lot adjacent to Hudson-Belk on Market Street and a few others, are generally unpaved and not at all landscaped. Their entrances and exits are often unmarked. Facilities that are as important to the downtown economy as these should be visually attractive, as well as functionally adequate.
- OVERHEAD WIRING. Looking up and down along Market

  Street in the downtown area against the sky, the
  presence of the overhead wiring is very much apparent.

  Its presence constitutes a minor eyesore. As there
  is not much one can do to beautify these wirings,
  relocating them to less obvious spots, such as
  back alleys or paralleling side streets, may offer
  a feasible alternative. Experience in other communities throughout the country indicates that their
  removal invariably improves the appearance of the
  downtown streets.
- LACK OF OUTDOOR SITTING AREA AND PUBLIC RESTROOM
  FACILITIES. For weary shoppers and those who are
  between errands, there is no public outdoor space
  for them to pause and rest. The over-all retail
  potential of downtown Smithfield will be enhanced
  if small landscaped areas with park benches, pools,
  plants, and restroom facilities are provided.
- NEUSE RIVER BANKS. Immediately adjacent to the north of downtown is the Neuse River. At present, the potential of that water course and its banks are far

from being realized. The thick vegetation growth over the swampy area can be ideally developed into a downtown park or the downtown portion of a comprehensive park system -- a green belt that follows the meandering course of Buffalo Creek and Neuse River.\*

#### - NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN APPROACHES TO THE DOWNTOWN.

Due to the unique development patterns of the community, the motorists rather abruptly enter the downtown area from the west along U.S. 70. There is hardly any transitional zone for the usual psychological build-up as the motorists leave the rural scenes behind and enter the thriving business district. The confrontation of the downtown's hustle-bustle seems all too sudden. There should be physical design features which would serve to moderate and to cushion this northerly approach to the town center.

Approaching from the south along Market Street from the direction of Interstate 95 and the railroad station, the visitors would have to drive through four or five blocks of greying area dotted with dilapidated residential, commercial and industrial buildings. Physical improvements in these blocks are definitely needed; and landscaping treatment along Market Street that would frame a better vista looking toward downtown from the east are also necessary.

<sup>\*</sup> Refer to Smithfield Land Development Plan, to be published concurrently with this study.

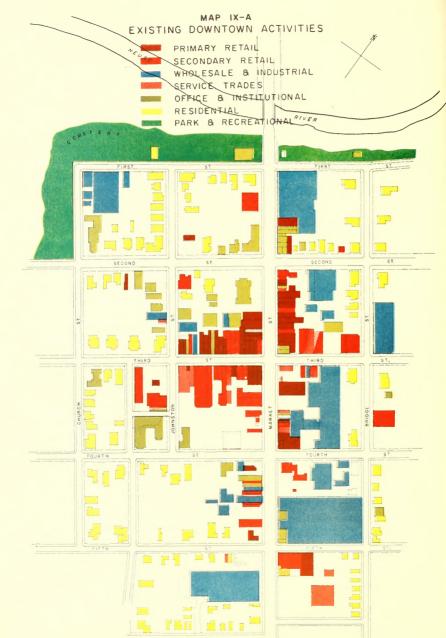


### CHAPTER IX THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT PLAN

In the preceding chapters, we have discussed in detail the most significant problems and opportunities confronting downtown Smithfield today. The purpose of that discussion, and the analyses that follow, is to provide a framework within which a realistic goal — the long-range physical development plan, may be formulated.

What is presented here in this chapter does <u>not</u> purport to be a set of finalized blue prints, the implementation of which would bring instant charm, prosperity and success to the core of a community. What is presented here is rather a set of probable solutions for various parts of downtown that are mutually compatible and inwardly balanced with each other. It is designed to be a long term, over-all solution, instead of one that is guided by one narrow set of considerations whatever that may be -- economical, engineering, esthetic, or any others.

The underlying factor in the formulation of this plan is "function" -- that under a given situation, in what way would a certain area work best. The resulting plan strives to be both flexible and realistic. It does not provide step-by-step instructions on what to do. Instead, it tells what could be done for a given area, in what ways the various parts of the downtown would work well as a whole over an extended period of time. Implicit in the development of this plan is the assumption that the plan functions well only if the whole plan can be carried out. Like a jig saw puzzel, the unifying features of the plan do not seem right until all of the pieces are in place.



A series of three maps graphically illustrate the existing conditions of the downtown area. Map IX-A shows the extent and locations of various types of activities and are currently found in downtown Smithfield. The general concentration of each activity forms the basis of Map IX-D, the Proposed Activities Zones which, in turn, becomes the base of the information whereby a proposed amended zoning district may be drawn. The concentration and compactness of primary retail activities is apparent in the map. These large commercial magnets are "fused" together by scores of small service trade establishments. A few retail places that stray from the core area may readily be seen also.

There is no doubt as to where the white collar professionals of downtown Smithfield are currently located. The directions of their establishments' future expansions are also apparent. These establishments are represented in the map under the designation of Office and Institution. Their current deployment constitutes a rational basis for creating such a zoning district in the downtown area in the future.

The intrusion of wholesale and industrial activities, and to an extent, the largely automobile oriented secondary retail trades, into the core area where land value is high as well as physical closeness between smaller establishments is stressed, is also made abundantly clear. The bulky expanses of such activities shown on the map are mostly the tobacco warehouses, five of which are located within the eight block downtown area.

There are a number of residential structures within the downtown area. Those located between First and Second Streets are largely well maintained, whereas those located below Fourth Street are mostly deteriorating or already in poor

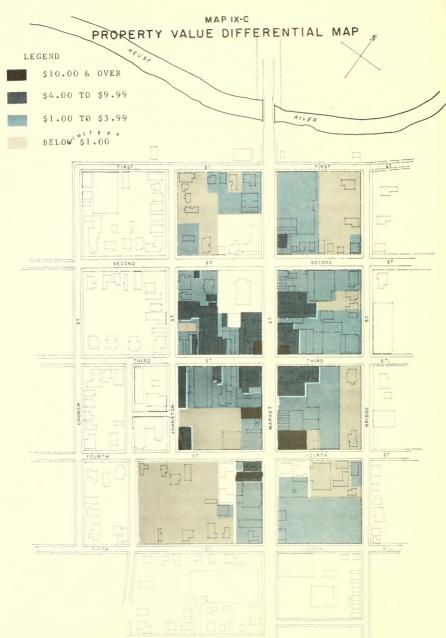
MAP IX-B BUILDING DEFICIENCY MAP DEFICIENCY FUNCTIONAL DEFICIENCY LOCATIONAL DEFICIENCY RIVER FIRST MARKET 922 922 922 922 922 Fire Kin

physical shape. There is also a sprinkling of nonresidential activities around the fringes of the downtown area -- in such places as west of Johnston Street and east of Bridge Street. Their presence tends to infringe upon the soundness of the host residential blocks and warrants prompt consideration. The presence of such professional trades as real estate, lawyers, engineers and architects offices usually are not deemed to be incompatible with the adjacent residential uses.

Map IX-B shows various types of deficiencies that exist in the downtown buildings. These deficiencies may be a combination of any of the following three types:

- <u>Physical Deterioration</u>, building that is structurally unsound.
- Functional Inadequacies, building that is in some ways unsuitable or inadequate for its current use: too small, too narrow or shallow, bad conversion from previous use, inadequate loading, etc.
- Locational Obsolescence, building that for its present use is no longer considered to be properly or optimally located -- a residential structure in the middle of the "Hundred Percent" block, a chronically vacant farm building in the heart of town, etc.

This map gives an excellent indication of where some buildings should not be and why some of them ought to be removed. It should be pointed out that aside from the usual traffic and parking problems the lack of growth or outright decline of any downtown area is caused largely by the contributing factors listed above.

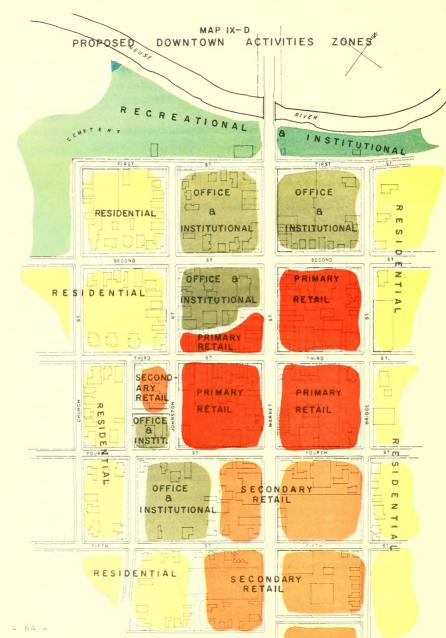


Map IX-C provides information on the range of real estate values within the downtown area. The figures indicated include both the land and the buildings. For the purpose of this study, only the eight core blocks are scanned for such information. The usual "front feet" measurement unit is discarded in favor of "square feet" as several uncommonly large parcels of land are to be found within this area. Information so revealed helps to determine the financial feasibility of the proposed scheme since the initial purchasing cost of land and buildings often constitute a formidable hurdle in the development process and the purchasing cost is largely determined by the fairly assessed taxable value of the real estate.

Map IX-D, Proposed Downtown Activity Zones is immediately followed by Map IX-E, Proposed Circulation and Parking Scheme, the two basic steps in planning an area. The location and the extent of the proposed activity zones or land uses of the downtown area is based largely upon the current development patterns and the growth trends observed. The few constraints are as follows: the residential blocks be protected from other uses and the industrial and wholesale storage uses be excluded from the eight downtown blocks as well as the immediate fringe areas. The principles and practice of sound industrial, agricultural, retail and residential development are to be abided by throughout.

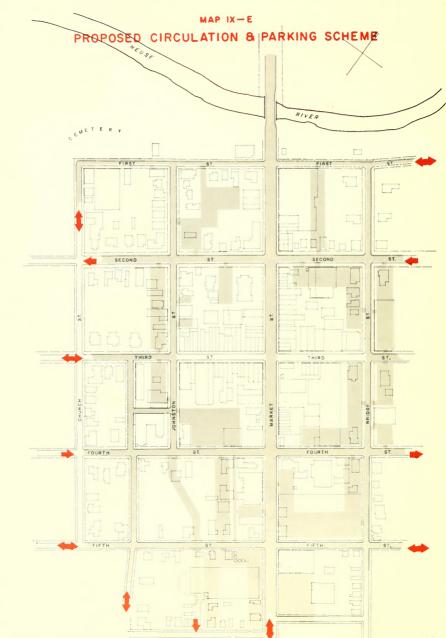
Map IX-E illustrates the general scheme for traffic circulation and parking. The major objectives of the long-range proposals are as follows:

- The gradual "weaning" of all through traffic or other
traffic not destined for the downtown area. The chief
beneficiary is intended to be Market Street where the



pedestrian traffic is perhaps the heaviest in town. Implicit is the assumption that a series of bypass and loop roads will be built in the future.

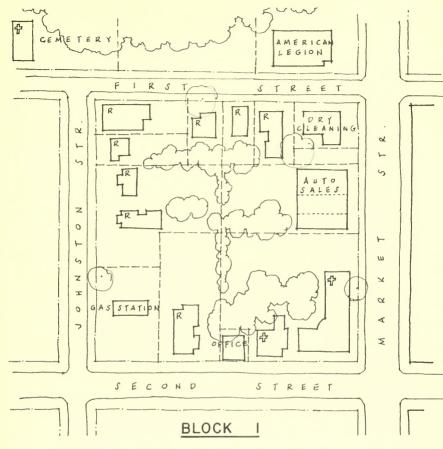
- The development of a downtown street system in the form of a one-way couple. Johnston and Bridge Streets will become one-way south and north respectively. This one-way system would hopefully eliminate much of the delay and traffic hazard due to turning against oncoming traffic. Also, these through streets will provide access to most of the parking areas in the downtown area.
- Third Street between Johnston and Bridge Streets
  will be cleared of all private and commercial vehicles, although emergency and service vehicles
  such as fire trucks, ambulances and garbage trucks
  will be allowed to enter this portion of Third
  Street. The curbs will be eliminated and the
  street is to be paved with materials that resemble
  a walkway such as brick, tile, terrazzo or any
  others that are inviting to the pedestrians.
- The extension of Johnston Street south of Fourth
  Street. In order to make the one-way loop system
  truly effective Johnston Street should be extended
  to make connection with the northern terminal of
  Massey Street. The motor traffic on the extension
  is to be designated one-way south.
- The development of a comprehensive perimeter parking scheme. The long-range parking scheme for downtown Smithfield is based on the following design principles.



- a. For the Office and Institution blocks, the parking areas are to be located in the center of the block. The present well kept up facades will thus be preserved.
- b. For the primary retail blocks, the parking areas are to be located by and entered from the one-way loop streets. In a situation where this scheme cannot adequately provide enough parking spaces, tracts of land will be borrowed from the adjacent residential blocks across from the one-way streets to supplement the parking needs. These borrowed parking areas will be landscaped and paved, thus forming a buffer green belt between the commercial and residential zones.
- c. For the secondary retail blocks, the parking areas may be either bordering along the loop street and main street, or in the center portion of the block, depending upon the circumstances.
- d. The parking areas should always come in long continuous strips or wider expanses. Land areas for parking can be much more efficiently utilized if they are not broken up into small parcels of land. In other words, more cars can be parked on the same amount of land if this amount comes in larger and continuous tracts.

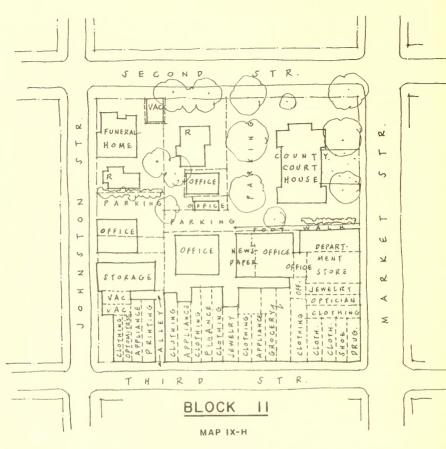
Immediately following the <u>Proposed Circulation and Parking</u> Scheme is a series of nine maps (Max IX-F through IX-N). These are the Block Analysis Maps in which each of the eight blocks covered in this study is individually discussed and analyzed in regard to its past development trends, current problems as well as its future potentials. The lead map (Map IX-F) is a key map where the downtown blocks are given proper numerical designations.

MAP IX-F BLOCK ANALYSIS-KEY MAP NEUSE RIVER THIRD ST. FOURTH

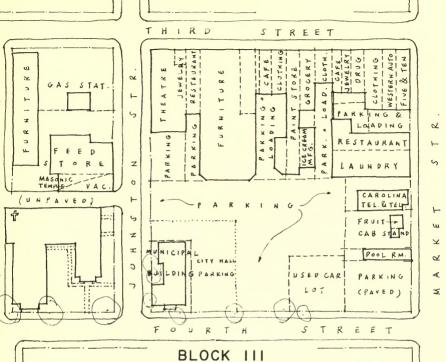


## MAP IX-G

This block is currently divided half and half between residential and nonresidential uses, both in number of structures and in the amount of land utilized. The residential buildings are uniformly well kept up. In fact, none of the structures within this block show any signs of physical deterioration. If any of the downtown type of activities are to expand, it is logical to regard the Office and Institution type as being the most suitable type for this block. Residence lends itself easily to such conversion with a minimum of exterior physical remodelling. Needed parking spaces may be grouped in the center of the block so that the expenses of asphalt paving would not marr the fine street facades.

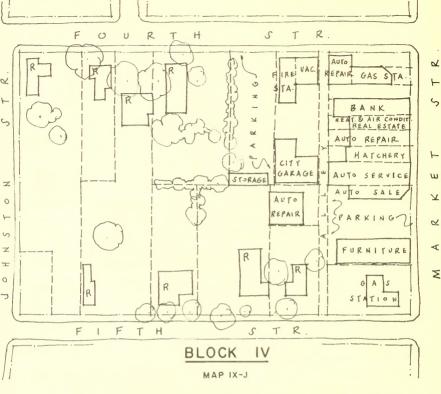


Offices and public buildings occupy the northern two-thirds of the block whereas a row of thriving retail and service shops take up the rest. The office and institution complex exudes a certain charm and urbanity that should be left unchanged. The buildings and the surrounding grounds are well kept up and parking problem is not a serious problem although more are definitely needed. For the retail area, on the other hand, there are no off-street parking. This is a most serious drawback for the shoppers and shop owners alike. The storage fronting on Johnston Street is obsolete in every way and should be cleared and the land be used for parking and the entrance portion of the existing back alley. An improved system of pedestrian walkways should be laid out in order to facilitate better connection among various office buildings, as well as the proposed parking areas across the streets.



Retail and service establishments occupy roughly one-half of the whole block. Parking appears to be adequate although they are poorly laid out and mostly unpaved. Better pedestrian connections between the parking lots and the store fronts are needed. The back of the commercial establishments are uniformly shabby and much clearing and physical improvements are sorely needed. The coal bin at the back of the laundry is as visually unsightly as the operation is functionally outmoded. The property fronting on Market Street below Carolina Telephone and Telegraph Company can be more intensively developed. At present, a fruit store, cab stand, pool room occupy this potentially valuable location. In short, the parking lots ought to be more efficiently and handsomely laid out. Posterior of stores should be improved. Pedestrian walkways may be added. Market Street front could be more intensely developed.

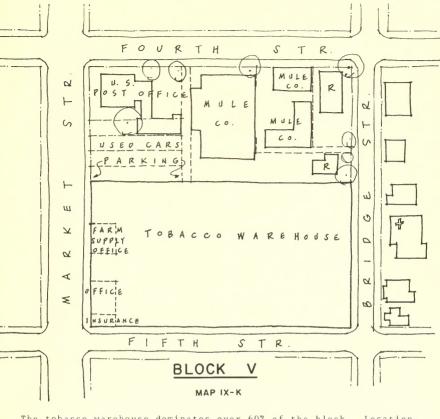
MAP IX-1



East of the alley, fronting on Market Street is a row of largely vehicular oriented commercial establishments such as furniture store, service station, etc. Among them are a few that show locational disadvantages, the bank for instance. Should the opportunities arise in the future, these establishments may be enticed back to more suitable locations further up the main street.

West of the alley, with the exception of the city maintenance depot and the functionally inadequate fire station, the block is entirely residential. The quality of these housing varies from good to deteriorating. Some of which are under pressure of downtown expansion to convert into other uses.

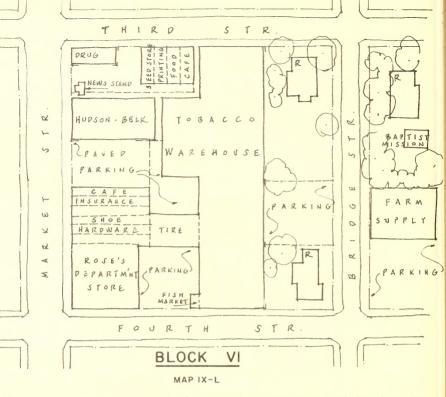
For long range considerations, this block is proposed to retain its secondary retail type (vehicular oriented) of commercial activities. Public or municipal uses are also considered to be suitable. As mentioned previously, an extension of Johnston Street is proposed to cut through the block. (See sketch above).



The tobacco warehouse dominates over 60% of the block. Locationwise, the warehouse's present address is no longer considered to be ideal. Functionally, utility of the building is also considered to be obsolete. Structurally, the building has not been well maintained. Less than two months out of a year does this building offer any use. Its part-time usefulness does not justify its hoarding of a premium location. Any prospect of development within this block depends entirely upon its timely removal.

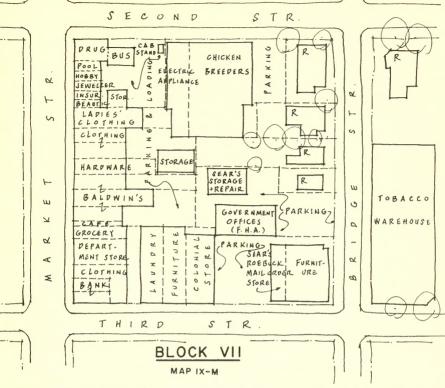
The two residences near the northeastern part of the block cannot expect to enjoy a proper living environment and therefore should be relocated. The U.S. Post Office and the Mule company appear to be well situated and properly maintained.

For future reuse of the vacated land, secondary retail activities (automobile oriented types) seem best suited for this block. In planning for this type of land use, ample amount of parking spaces is considered essential.

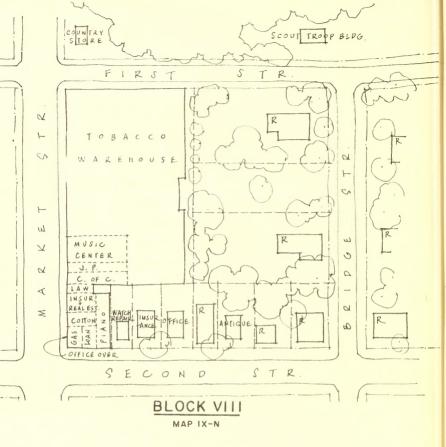


This is the emerging retail block of the downtown. Much has been improved during the recent past but more remains to be done. Two of the largest department stores in the community are located within this block The small service type of establishments does not, however, seem to adequately "fuse" them together. This is largely due to a number of open and/or dead spaces in between. Small, piece-meal parking areas, of which there are less than four, intrude upon this potentially fine retailservice core. The drugstore situated at the "hundred percent" corner, is surrounded by vacant and ungainly looking open spaces that is used for parking. The biggest dead space within the block is obvious the tobacco warehouse. It occupies a strategic location and blocks further developments within this area. Its removal is recommended. company is also badly situated, as well as structurally inadequate. Shabby is the appearance of the four service establishments between the drugstore and the warehouse. The two residences should make way for higher form of use within this high value block.

In short, the parking lots and some other service establishments should be relocated and redesigned. More retail and service spaces may be provided on the vacated warehouse land. Land within this block should be more intensively utilized.



This is the traditional retail block of the community and long since fully developed for commercial uses. Some of the functionally inadequate store spaces are currently being revamped. Structurally, the buildings appear to be fairly well kept up, shabbiness, however, is apparent in the back of buildings fronting on Market Street. Spaces in the upper stories are either unused or functionally inadequate. Although there are a number of parking spaces located within the block, off-street parking for shoppers are in grave shortage. Loading spaces and service yards in the interior of the block is interspersed with dilapidated storage buildings. Several establishments such as the chicken breeders, laundry, supermarket, and governmental offices show locational disadvantages and should be eventually relocated. Piece-meal park areas, as in the case of Block VI, ought to be consolidated and relocated within the block. The four residences fronting on Bridge Street may be best relocated to a neighborhood where living environment is more suitable. If both Block VI and VII could be fully developed according to their designated activities, the conversion of Third Street between Market and Bridge Streets into a largely pedestrian precint may be justified.



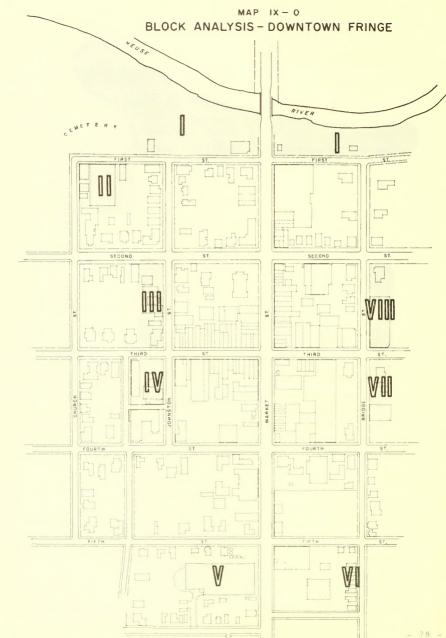
This is a block that is at once underdeveloped and needs to be redeveloped. Approximately half of the total area is occupied by five residences, where the tobacco warehouse occupies nearly all the rest. Most of the nonresidential structures are both functionally inadequate and physically dilapidated. Since these structures are located at the "front" of the block, namely facing Market Street, the rest of the block cannot be developed unless the "front" portion can first be redeveloped This block provides the logical location for the expanded offices and institutions now concentrated in the vicinity of the Courthouse. About a dozen of such establishments are already located within the block. The solid facade of the warehouse, thinly patched with coats of paint, does not present to the visiting public a positive impression of Smithfield. whereas, in place of this useless remain of another era, a row of new offices and professional buildings, civic clubs, libraries, etc., would certainly enhance the image of the community, not to speak of accommodating the future demand for such spaces.

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## DOWNTOWN FRINGE - Analysis and Proposed Treatments

Planning for downtown Smithfield should not be limited to strictly within the eight core blocks. Around the immediate fringe of the downtown, there are currently several problem areas that warrant prompt attention. Listed below are some of the more significant ones. Map IX-D graphically denotes the location as well as the approximate extent of these areas.

- I Neuse River Bank. This low-lying swampy area immediately to the north of the downtown core represents an opportunity unexploited. At present, despite of its close proximity to downtown and a shortage of usable recreational land within the community, this area remains undeveloped. The thick growth should be partially cleared, recreational facilities installed and the whole area properly landscaped. Properly developed, this area is in an excellent position to favorably impress the incoming motoring public.
- II- The Community Maintenance Yard. Situated deep within a residential neighborhood, this maintenance depot does little to enhance the livability of the
  whole area. The shabby appearance of car barns
  along with the droning and roaring of the motors
  may be more suitably relocated to some other
  location within the community. (See Section V
  below). The vacated land may either be reverted
  back to residential use or some forms of institutional use. Such as housing for the aged, civic
  clubs, etc.
- III- Deficient Structures beyond the Core Area. A group  ${\stackrel{\&}{\kappa}}$  of nonresidential buildings is located in a predominantly well preserved residential block south of



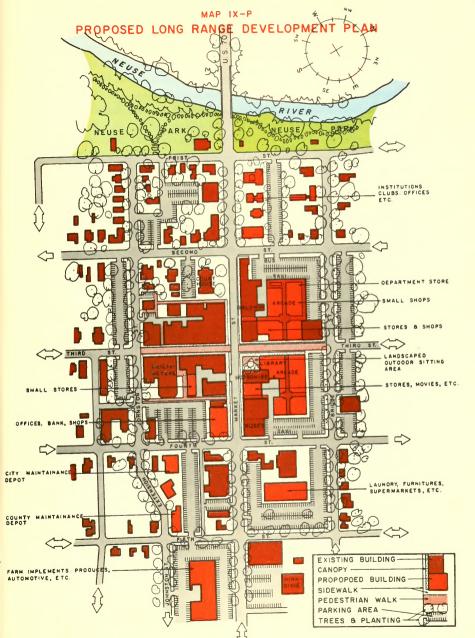
Johnston between First and Second Streets. This represents a southward expansion of downtown activities. Some of these activities such as storage shed and yard, a wholesale grocery and a feed store, are no longer considered to be a part of the core area. Instead of infringing upon a well kept up residential neighborhood, these types of activities should be more suitably located at some outlying areas with lower land cost as well as better accessibility. The two libraries and a partially vacant structure which houses the Masonic Temple show strong functional deficiencies. For them, new quarters and new locations are needed. These two tracts of fringe area land may be best reused as a landscaped, paved parking area for the retail and service core directly across the street. The office areas in that block are at present similarly short of parking space. A proposed parking lot in these two areas would do well to supplement this parking deficiency.

V - Tobacco Warehouse and Neighboring Structures. As in the case of other tobacco warehouses within the downtown area, this one is locationally, structurally and functionally obsolete. The structure is antiquated and has not been fully in use. For its function the warehouse is more suited for an outlying location. The adjacent buildings, in the shadow of this huge structure are mostly dilapidated and should be removed. The future reuse of the land seems best suited for the vehicular oriented secondary retail business such as furniture stores, supermarkets, farm implement sales and service, etc. The county maintenance depot should also be considered as a suitable occupant.

VI- Dilapidated Residential Structures. A group of substandard houses in the back of Winn-Dixie store along the west side of Bridge Street should be cleared. In close proximity to the automobile oriented retail establishments, this narrow strip of land is not best suited for residential reuse. The best use of this tract of land probably lies in secondary retail, similar to the rest of the block.

VIII—Tobacco Warehouse and Adjacent Structures. One more

tobacco warehouse is to be found in close proximity
of downtown core area. As with the others within the
central district, this one is recommended to be relocated. The farm supply store located in Area VII
is ideally suited in an outlying locale, with greater
accessibility and cheaper land cost. In some future
date, this store may hopefully be relocated. The
vacated land is tentatively proposed as a supplement
parking area for the downtown primary retail core immediately across the street.



The various proposed elements are graphically synthesized in Map IX-P. This plan can be best described as an "ultimate" plan for the present downtown area. The extent of the proposed layout is not actually restricted by the amount of various floor spaces projected in the previous chapters. Rather, the resulting plan is intended to show what the optimal physical arrangement would be if a given area is to be developed or redeveloped eventually, in relation to the rest of the downtown, as well as the community at large.

Gaging physical future growth according to past trends is often risky and unreliable. This is especially true in the case of smaller communities, where growth or decline usually occurs in escalations of sudden spurts. It is therefore deemed more practical to adopt the present approach — that, given an opportunity for growth, what would be the most rational arrangement of physical components in terms of over-all efficiency, esthetics as well as feasibility. This approach is validated by the findings of planning professionals which state that regardless of its physical size, an urban area possesses essentially the same internal functional relationship as the others, although its physical form is determined and modified by the geographical attributes of the site.

In order to preserve the excellent residential blocks bordering the downtown area, to expediently reuse the commercially developed blocks as well as to strengthen the existing retail core, the proposed scheme continues to orient the downtown core along the Market Street axis. All subsequent expansions of downtown activities will likewise follow this direction. The lone exception is in the development of further retail activities, which will be encouraged to expand toward the north side of Market Street, thus balancing the existing shops

now concentrated to the west of the Main Street. This scheme also provides the existing establishments alternate locations within the downtown area should these stores demand additional spaces that mere remodeling or addition cannot adequately fulfill.

In the proposed scheme shown in Map IX-P, serving the eight downtown core blocks will be a conservatively estimated total of 1,425 off-street parking spaces, excluding the areas designated as loading and alleys. This figure is considered eminently adequate for any community with population up to about 12,000. It is also to be pointed out that all on-street parking would be eventually phased out within the core area. Highlighted below is a list of design features contained within the plan:

- Widening of sidewalks along both sides of Market Street between Second and Fourth Streets. This would provide added convenience for pedestrian shoppers as well as an opportunity for merchants to display merchandise in free standing show cases.
- Construction of arcades between Second and Fourth
  Streets east of Market Street. If such demands should
  arise, the provision of additional service and retail
  shops at this location would greatly strengthen the
  existing retail core. The interior may be air conditioned to combat inclement weather conditions outside.
- Addition of a new department store at the extreme end of one arcade (see Map). This would encourage the pedestrian shoppers to traverse back and forth between this and the rest of the established retail magnets, (i.e. department stores), thus more fully utilize the new service and other small retail facilities within the arcades.

- Development of a comprehensive, canopy-covered pedestrian walk system within the retail core area connecting all the major retail, professional service and administrative activity nodes.
- Provision of additional office and shop spaces across from the new Rose's Department Store. Its potential is currently not being fulfilled.
- Clean-up and fix-up of the rear of the stores fronting on the south side of Third Street between Johnston and Market Streets. A few small stores fronting on the pedestrian walks may be added to provide an entirely new look to the parking area which is to be hard surfaced and landscaped.
- Insertion of small shops in the gap beside Hudson-Belk along Market Street. This location may be more profitably utilized with commercial establishments instead of parking lots.
- Provision of outdoor rest area near the center of the core area. A small pool or fountain, a few benches and some greenery in the heart of the downtown will serve the following functions:
  - a. The weary pedestrian shoppers are given a place of rest.
  - b. A beautified, open spot in the built-up area serves as a welcome "change-of-pace."
  - c. Additional shops or stores can open into this area, therefore more fully utilizing the "hundred percent corner" of the community.
- Development of Neuse Park. Recreational facilities, benches, sheds should be added to the Park for the potential users of all ages.

- Relocating overhead wiring from Market Street to some side streets. The vistas along the main street would be greatly improved if these wirings can be removed from sight.
- Installation of "special" street lighting fixtures along Market Street between Second and Fourth Streets, and Third Street between Johnston and Bridge Streets. These fixtures are "special" in the sense that they should be distinct from those used elsewhere in the community. Good design should be a major consideration in the selection of the fixture.
- Planting of street trees along the approaches of the downtown area as well as along the side streets. Rows of properly selected species of trees may be planted along Market Street west of Second Street and east of Fourth Street. Loop streets -- Johnston and Bridge Streets -- are to be likewise landscaped.
- Beautification or landscaping is to be considered as an integral part of the improvement of the parking areas.
- Provision of additional secondary retail spaces south of Fourth Street along Market Street. These areas are reserved for such business activities as farm implements, automotive, furniture, etc. The buildings are to be surrounded by adequately land-scaped parking areas.
- Forming of maintenance depot complex across the street from the existing Municipal Building. A core which is to be consisted of a new fire station, city maintenance yard, and county maintenance yard.

 Institutional type of uses such as Housing for the Aged may be located on the site vacated by the County Maintenance Depot.

## $\label{eq:chapter X} \text{TOOLS FOR ACHIEVING THE PLAN}$

Some will say that the plan we have proposed for the development of downtown Smithfield is too ambitious, that it is impossible of achievement. It is ambitious, but it is possible for it to be brought about. In this chapter we will recommend some initial steps toward its achievement, and also some of the technical problems involved.

The first step to be taken is detailed and thoughtful consideration of this plan and its objectives. There are in Smithfield community leaders, City officials and others, who will take up the challenge of converting this recommended plan of development into concrete action. The Planning Board has guided the formulation of this plan, and its members are convinced that it is important for Smithfield to get started toward achievement of its objectives. But they cannot carry it out. Their most important role is to publicize, explain, and solicit support for the over-all objectives and for projects which will serve to achieve this objective. City Council action is necessary for achievement of the plan; so the Councilmen must make it their plan and take action in accordance with it, and the citizens must support them in this. However, the City has neither the legal power nor the resources to do many of the things required to make the plan a reality. The landowners and businessmen, individually and through their Chamber of Commerce and other organizations, must do many of the things necessary to improve their downtown in accordance with the plan. The partnership of public and private enterprise must be a reality if Smithfield is to take full advantage of the opportunities which exist in its downtown.

The following projects are recommended as those which should be among the first to be undertaken.

There are two problem areas that involve technical concepts and limitations with which many are not familiar, and also basic questions of the proper roles of local government and private enterprise. These are the provisions of off-street parking and of means of guiding specific developments to the right location. We will present some of the alternatives in a general way, but these are obviously areas in which legal and other appropriate professional advice should be taken.

A new store of other substantial development which would be a great asset in a proper downtown location may eventually be built in some other location, or may never get past the planning stage, because the proper downtown site cannot be obtained within a reasonable length of time. This may happen simply because an owner and a potential buyer cannot agree on price, but we are chiefly concerned with other complicating factors. In an already-developed area, such as downtown Smithfield, the individual parcels of land are often small, which may mean that a number of adjacent parcels have to be purchased to assemble a satisfactory site for development. And the ownership of any given parcel, large or small, is likely to be split among a number of interests, and may be tied up in trusts, estates, and the like. The time necessary to overcome such land assembly problems often frustrates desirable downtown development. What is required, then, is a means of assembling a good site when appropriate and beneficial development is on the horizon.

In some cases this problem may be handled by local businessmen who will use their knowledge and influence, first, to find a site which will meet the needs of the potential developer and,

at the same time, contribute to attaining the objectives of the plan and, then, to expedite the land acquisition process. They might want to call on professional land use planners for assistance in the first stage.

Certain locations where serious land assembly problems might arise are suitable for interim use as customer parking even though their long-range development potential is as significant as retailing locations, such as opposite the Courthouse and between Fourth Street and the Telephone Building. Such sites might be acquired as soon as possible and improved for parking, with the intention of moving the parking to another location when the more appropriate retailing development became feasible. The cost of paving such a site for parking would be negligible in comparison with the potential benefits to be derived from such an arrangement. The City is not permitted to buy real estate and hold it for future development; this would be considered speculation. But the City may, under certain conditions, provide off-street parking.

North Carolina municipalities offer two kinds of functions or services. Most are what are called governmental functions, which are services private individuals cannot provide, like police protection and street maintenance, and which are paid for directly from tax revenues. The others, called proprietary functions, are services which are sometimes provided by private enterprises, as is the case with water supply and off-street parking, among others. Before it can establish an off-street parking facility, the City Council must pass a resolution which expresses their conclusion, based on the opinions of citizens expressed in a public hearing to which all are invited and on studies by qualified experts such as the information presented in this report, that the facility is necessary for the public convenience and welfare. The Council must then provide for financing the cost of the parking facility, using

only nontax funds for this purpose. In general, this means that the facility must be self-supporting, that the revenue from the parking lot must be sufficient to pay for its maintenance and other operating expenses and to make the required payments on bonds issued to finance acquisition and improvement of the lot. If the city makes a profit on the operation of one revenue-producing enterprise, such as the water supply system, and if there are no outstanding bonds or notes issued for that enterprise, then the city may use the profit from that enterprise to finance another, such as off-street parking.\*

If the parking is provided entirely by the City, the customers are probably going to have to bear the full cost of it. If they do have to pay much for parking in downtown, customers will tend to go elsewhere. However, the provision of an adequate amount of parking has become a normal and accepted part of the cost of operating a store. We believe that the downtown Smithfield businessmen should, and would, bear all or most of the cost of parking for their customers. The plan and the estimated parking requirements which it meets are based on this assumption; so if the businesmen do not accept this responsibility, less parking will be required.

The parking will, of course, serve its purpose best if concentrated in relatively few locations, as shown on the plan, and if all spaces are equally available to customers of all stores. This is the pattern found in the modern shopping centers, where the parking is built and maintained by the owner of the land, and each merchant's share of the cost is included in his rent. This kind of arrangement is obviously not possible in an area which is already developed. Also, it

<sup>\*</sup> Report by Attorney Fred Bynum, Jr., of Rockingham to the Rockingham Chamber of Commerce, April 24, 1962.

is desirable and reasonable for the City to participate in the provision of downtown parking, though its participation is not absolutely essential. Cooperation of the downtown business interests and the City in the provision of off-street parking may be organized in at least three quite different ways; by a parking token or validation scheme, through benefit assessments, and through purchase of off-street parking bonds. The first method is in many ways the most simple and direct, and yet in many cases it has not worked well. The City might build the facilities and charge parking rates large enough to pay the full cost, and accept payment either directly from the person who uses a parking space or in the form of a ticket or token which the merchants pay for and give to their customers. Parking meters are made for this purpose; they will accept either a coin or a token. The disadvantages of this system are that merchants know that most customers will visit several stores on one trip and fail to give tokens or tickets to many of their customers, assuming that they will get them somewhere else, and that the system requires either the arbitrary time limits imposed by meters or the additional expense of providing a parking attendant.

The benefit assessment method comes close to the ideal arrangement of the shopping center, and has been used with considerable success in some other states. In 1951 a state law was passed specifically providing for benefit assessments for parking (G.S. 160-504), but so far as we know no North Carolina municipality has taken advantage of it. The mechanics of this method are much the same as those under which the City may pave a street or install a sewer and assess the cost against the owners of the land which is benefitted by the improvement with provisions, in the case of the parking, for the cost to be spread over twenty years. The requirement is that there be agreement on a basis for assessment, front footage, square feet of floor area, or some other basis, and that a petition

be signed by enough of the owners if land within the area to be served to represent both half of the number of owners and half of the total basis for assessment. All owners within the area must pay their assessed share of the cost of the parking facility, regardless of whether or not they signed the petition.

Interest on long-term bonds would be a substantial part of the total cost of a parking facility. The businessmen could underwrite this part, or even more, of the cost and thus reduce the amount charged customers and visitors by voluntarily purchasing parking bonds which carry little or no interest or which have been sold for more than their face value. This system, if it reduced the cost to the parker to a really nominal amount, would have the same advantages as a token or validation system and would avoid one of the problems in that the merchant's decision would be made at one time rather than each time a customer makes a purchase.

The courtesy ticket system now used to alleviate the time limit problem with the on-street meters shows that Smithfield businessmen are aware of the problems involved and have the initiative to solve them. We are confident that they will forge satisfactory tools to achieve their objectives, and thus we simply present some of the alternatives as a starting point for discussion.



